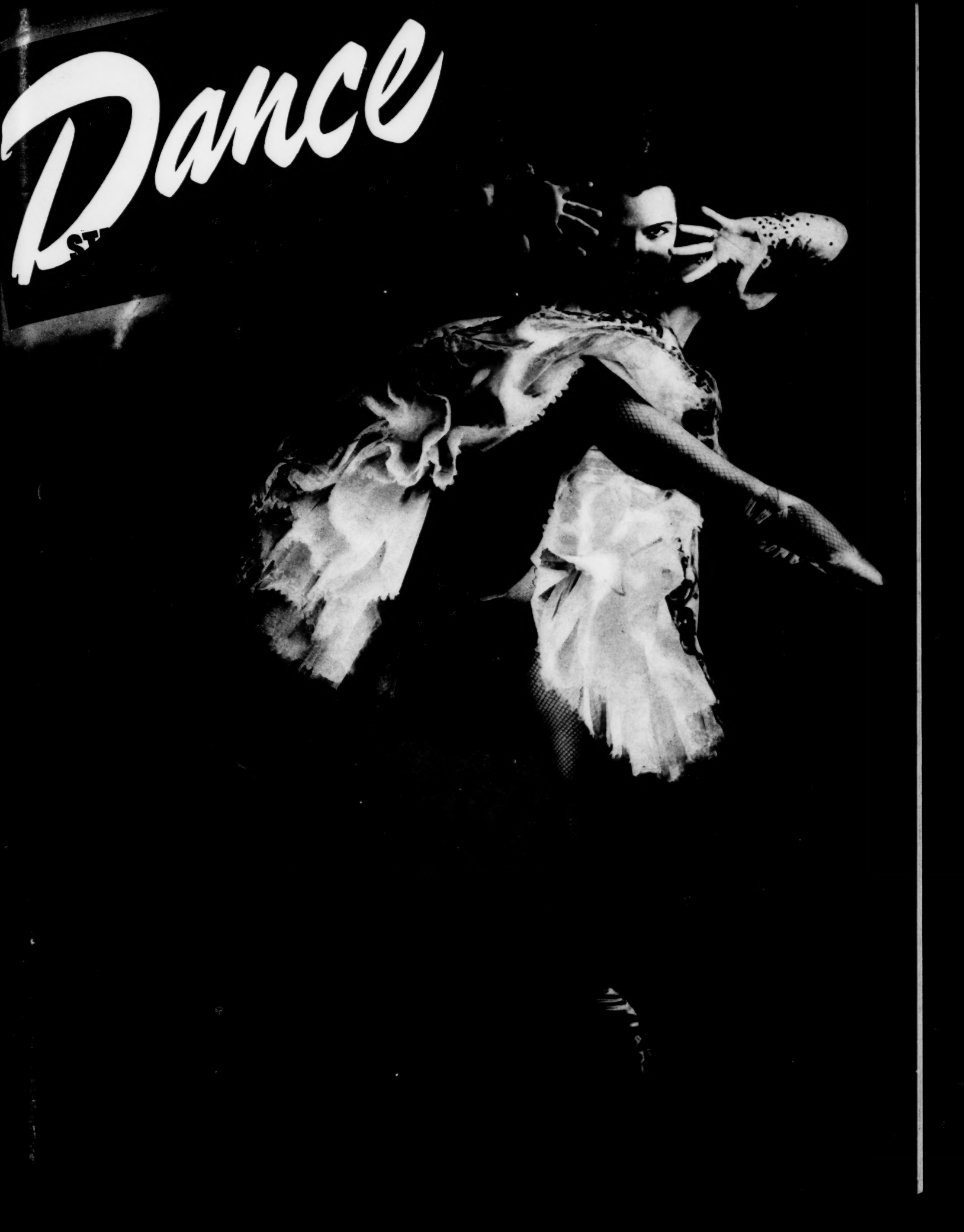
Dance



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READERS WRITE

Sirs:

I thoroughly enjoyed the square dance pictures in your October issue. Why don't you print more stories on folk-dancing, both American and European? I'd like to see them.

BOB O'DONNELL
Chicago, Illinois

Sirs:

I like dancing. I like night clubs. Can't I enjoy them together? The music in New York's night spots is tops. Why won't they give us a real dance floor, instead of a postage-stamp size, so-called "dance floor"?

AL ROGINSKY
New York, N. Y.

Sirs:

Through Mr. Orthwine's editorials in the past I have been aware of his high ideals and belief in mankind, a rare must in this world.

What the September issue brings us is that he has not only excelled himself on thoughts that make people and mankind great, along with untarnished Science, but he has written in such beautiful sentences that my hat is off to him most sincerely and respectfully.

A. ARGUELLES
New York, N. Y.

Sirs:

In my opinion, ten fancy speeches about "One World" do less good than one vibrantly alive Afro-Cuban dance by Katherine Dunham and her troupe, or one moving Indian ritual dance interpreted by La Meri. Ethnic dancing can do much to bring the nations of the world into closer harmony. If you know how the other fellow lives, how he feels, what his beliefs are, you find it harder to think of him as an alien.

Through dancing, which is fundamentally an expression of emotion, we can gain a sympathetic understanding of others. That is why it is so important to develop authentic, sincere ethnic dancing, for cheap theatricalism distorts our concept of a people as well as misrepresenting their dance.

JOY HALPERN
Washington, D. C.

(continued on page 8)

DANCE, published monthly by The Rudor Publishing Company, 520 W. 34 St., New York 1, N. Y. Rudolf Orthwine, President and Treasurer; Lillian Orthwine, Vice-President; Jacob Landau, Secretary. Reentered as second-class matter February, 1946, at the Post Office New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1945, by the Rudor Publishing Co. All rights reserved. Contents of the magazine may not be reproduced in whole or in part without permission. Printed in U. S. A. Subscription prices: United States and possessions, 1 year $3, two years $5; Pan-American and Canada, 1 year $3.50, two years $6; other foreign, 1 year $4, two years $7. Single copies 25 cents. Two weeks notice is required for a change of address or for a new subscription. List address exactly as it appeared on wrapper of last magazine received.

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Dance CALENDAR

Ballet

ORIGINAL BALLET RUSSE (incorporating Markova-Dolin Ballet). Through October 23, at the Metropolitan Opera House.

BALLET THEATRE
Oct. 1-Nov. 2 at the Broadway Theatre.

Concerts

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL OF NEEDLE TRADES, 235 W. 24th St.
Oct. 26—Merce Cunningham, Jean Erdmann and Yuriko Amemiya.
Nov. 30—Pauline Koner.

CARNEGIE HALL
Nov. 17—Iva Kitchell

YMHA, 92nd St. & Lexington Avenue.
Oct. 27—Nina Fonaroff and Group.
Nov. 10—Pearl Primus and Group.

Musicals

ANNIE GET YOUR GUN, Imperial Theatre.
"Cowgirl" musical with Lubov Roudenko and Daniel Nagrin. Choreography by Helen Tamiris. Music by Irving Berlin.

CALL ME MISTER, National Theatre.
Revue about ex GIs with dances by John Wray for Maria Karnilova, David Nilo and cast. Music by Harold Rome delivered by Betty Garrett and Lawrence Winters.

CAROUSEL, Majestic Theatre.
The New England version of Liliom with Betta Striegler in Agnes de Mille's dances.

GYPSY LADY, Century Theatre
Musical with dancing by Val Valentinoff to Aida Broadbent's choreography.

OKLAHOMA! St. James Theatre.
Now three years old. Agnes de Mille's dances.

SHOW BOAT, Ziegfeld Theatre.
Pearl Primus and Claude Marchant dance to Jerome Kern's music and Helen Tamiris' choreography.

SONG OF NORWAY, Broadway Theatre.
Operetta based on Grieg's life and music. Dorothie Littlefield dances.

THE RED MILL, 46th St. Theatre.
Victor Herbert's famous musical. Eddie Foy, Jr. stars.

THREE TO MAKE READY, Broadhurst Theatre.
A revue starring Ray Bolger with Harold Lang and Jane Deering.

Ice Shows

ICELAND RESTAURANT. "Alice in Wonderland", starring Marilyn Quinn.

ICETIME, Center Theatre. Sonja Henie — Arthur Wirtz show with choreography by Catherine Littlefield.

IRIDIUM ROOM, St. Regis Hotel. "Ice Pictorials", starring Carol Lynne, and featuring George Wagner and Jack Strand.

Night Clubs

CAFE SOCIETY UPTOWN. Dorothy Jarnac, satirical dancer.

CARNIVAL. Miriam Lavelle, acrobatic dancer.

DIAMOND HORSESHOE. "The Toast of the Town", revue with Art Bourbon and Ann Pennington.

EL CHICO. Trio Gitano and Trinita Reyes, Mexican flamenco dancers.

GLASS HAT, Belmont Plaza Hotel. Ted and Rita, The Dancing Duanos, Kathryn Duffy Dancers in "The Magazine Girl" revue.

HAVANA-MADRID. Carmen and Rolando and the Havana Maidrids in a Sergio Orta revue.

LATIN QUARTER. Ted Lewis and revue, featuring Geraldine Du Bois, Paul White, Elroy Peace, and The Four Esquires.

PERSIAN ROOM, Hotel Plaza. The DeMarcos, through Nov. 7.

WEDGWOOD ROOM. Paul Draper.

Movie Houses

PARAMOUNT. "Blue Skies", with Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire, featuring Olga San Juan. Dances staged by Hermes Pan.

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL. "The Jolson Story" with Larry Parks and Evelyn Keyes. On stage, "All In A Day", featuring Nirska.

ROXY. "Margie", starring Jeanne Crain and Alan Young. On stage: Gae Foster Roxyettes.

Folk Dancing

CITY FOLK DANCE SOCIETY, 9 E. 59 st.
Saturdays 9-11 p.m.

COMMUNITY FOLK DANCE CENTER, Central H. S. of Needle Trades, 235 West 24 St., Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays 8-11 P.M.

COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY, Dalcroze School of Music, 130 W. 56 St. Thursdays 7:30-10:30 p.m.

SQUARE DANCING, YWCA, Lexington Ave. & 53 St. Thursdays 8:30-11:30 p.m.

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On Tour

BALLET FOR AMERICA. Oct. 21, Columbus, Ga.; 22, Birmingham, Ala.; 23, Montgomery, Ala.; 25, Jacksonville, Fla.; 26, Savannah, Ga.; 30, Mobile, Ala.; Oct. 31-Nov. 2, New Orleans, La.; Nov. 4-5, Dallas, Texas; 6, Waco, Texas; 7, San Antonio, Texas; 8-9, Houston Texas; 11, Beaumont, Texas; 12, Shreveport, La.; 13-14, Fort Worth, Texas; 15, Wichita Falls, Texas; 16, Amarillo, Texas; 18-19, Tulsa, Okla.; 20-21, Oklahoma City, Okla.

BALLET RUSSE DE MONTE CARLO. Oct. 21-22, Madison, Wis.; 23, Davenport, Ia.; 25-27, Kansas City, Mo.; 28, Salina, Kan.; 30, Wichita, Kan.; Nov. 1-2, Denver, Col.; 4 Boise, Idaho; 6-9, Seattle, Wash.; 10-12, Portland, Ore.; 15, 17-24, San Francisco, Cal.; 16, Sacramento, Cal.; 25, San Jose, Cal.; 27, Los Angeles, Cal.; 28, Santa Ana, Cal.; 29-30, Los Angeles, Cal.

BALLET THEATRE. Nov. 4-16, Philadelphia, Pa.; 18-30, Boston, Mass.

ICE-CAPADES. Until Oct. 31, Philadelphia, Pa.; Nov. 1-17, Washington, D. C.; 18-25, Springfield, Mass.; Nov. 26-Dec. 1, Buffalo, N. Y.

JOOSS BALLET. October 21-26, Toronto, Canada; 28, Hamilton, Ontario; 29, London, Ontario; 30, Detroit, Michigan; 31, Indianapolis, Indiana; November 1-2, Chicago, Illinois; 4, Bloomington, Indiana; 5, St. Louis, Missouri; 6, Memphis, Tennessee; 7, Nashville, Tennessee; 8, Evansville, Indiana; 9, Louisville, Kentucky; 11, Cincinnati, Ohio; 12, Oxford, Ohio; 13, Springfield, Ohio; 14, Columbus, Ohio; 15, Youngstown, Ohio; 16, Akron, Ohio; 18, Lancaster, Pa.; 19, Newark, N. J.; 20, Scranton, Pa.; 22, Rochester, N. Y.; 23, Buffalo, N. Y.; 25, Syracuse, N. Y.; 26, Binghamton, N. Y.; 27, Philadelphia, Pa.; 28, Allentown, Pa.; 29, Baltimore, Md.; December 3-21, New York City.

PEARL PRIMUS. Nov. 13, Pittsburgh, Pa.; 15, Durham, N. C.; 16, Winston-Salem, N. C.; 17, Institute, West Va.; 18, Bluefield, West Va.; 20, Philadelphia.

SKATING VANITIES. Oct. 29-Nov. 3, Omaha, Neb.; 6-10, Chattanooga, Tenn.; 12-17, Memphis, Tenn.; 19-24, St. Louis, Mo.; 26-Dec. 1, Kansas City, Mo.

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Dance

LONDON . . .

Lydia Lopkhova (Lady Keynes) has been appointed to the Art Council of Great Britain . . . Ballet Rambert's October season in London featured a revival of Andree Howard's ballet "Croquis de Mercure" . . . Madama Egorova came from Paris to supervise classes for International Ballet during its season at the London Coliseum. Several of Egorova's pupils have joined the company...Henry Danton, soloist in the Sadler's Wells Ballet, has left to join Les Ballets des Champs Elysees...The stage version of "A Bullet in the Ballet," with Massine and Baronova in the cast, opened in the provinces late in September prior to a London premiere . . . Robert Helpmann is to appear on Broadway in a stage adaptation of Dostoievsky's "Crime and Punishment"...The R.A.D. Production Club will hold a public exhibition of nearly 200 entries submitted in its competition for decor and costumes for an imaginary ballet by a non-professional designer.

NEW YORK . . .

Felicia Sorrell will stage the dances for the all-Negro production of the Gilbert Seldes translation of "Lysistrata" and the American Repertory Theatre's "Henry VIII" . . . Thalia Mara and Arthur Mahoney have announced a course in Ballet for Balletomanes at the School of Dance Arts for non-professionals who want to learn something about ballet style and technique with a minimum of effort . . . Katherine Dunham's new concert-revue, "Bal Negre," is scheduled to tour this country, Mexico and South America . . . Lucas Hoving, formerly of the Jooss Ballet, has adapted principles of dance to the needs of actors in the American Theatre Wing's unique "university" for returned veterans of the entertainment world...Agna Enters' play, "Love Possessed Juana," is due on Broadway this season after a Houston, Texas, debut.

CHICAGO . . .

Edna Christensen of Racine, Wisconsin, was elected president of the Chicago National Association of Dancing Masters at the recent convention that was attended by 400 members, including 65 new ones . . . Chicago will have a Harvest Moon Dance Contest to be held in the Chicago Stadium on November 24 . . . Walter Camryn, with Billy Reilly, is doing the Medicine Show from his concert repertoire to much applause in the current presentation at the Stevens Hotel Boulevard Room . . . The road company of "Oklahoma!" which is heading towards Chicago, has Carmen Cansino in the leading dance role. Carmen is the daughter of Angel Cansino and cousin of Rita Hayworth ..."Bloomer Girl" is playing with Peggy Campbell in the role originated by Joan McCracken.

CANADA . . .

Dorothy Wilson resigned as the head of the British Columbia School of Dancing, originally founded by June Roper. She will teach at the newly formed B. C. Institute of Music and Drama . . . "Theatre Under the Stars" in Vancouver concluded its summer presentations with a new work titled "Song of the "Flame," featuring the Don Cossack Chorus in a cast of otherwise native talent . . . Elizabeth Leese, originally scheduled to choreograph the French-Canadian comedian Fridolin's revue, was replaced by Elvira Gomez, who is responsible for most of the show girl routines in Montreal... Foxhole Ballet performing the ballet "Circus" of Charles Magnan, in Frank Coleman's orchestration in Toronto... Ballet for America opens the local dance season, which will include four or five companies ...The Skating Vanities has been playing to capacity houses in Montreal.

HOLLYWOOD . . .

Mark Stevens will dance on the screen for the first time when he and June Haver do a cakewalk for "I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now." Stevens began his career as a dancer in a Montreal night club...RKO is trying to find a new name for its latest discovery, Valya Valentinoff. Val is in New York with "Gypsy Lady" and returns in November to embark on his new career . . . The superstition that Friday the thirteenth is unlucky meant nothing to Mia Slavenska. She chose that day in September for her wedding to Dr. Neumann in fashionable Sherman Oaks in Califorina...Viola Essen is in Las Vegas for the customary six weeks for a divorce from her short-lived marriage with Richard Bench. When the decree is final, Viola will wed Werner Gebauer, the concert violinist, who was once married to Nathalie Krassovska ..."The Life of Anna Pavlova" will be resumed in England after Toumanova does a season with the Paris Opera. Robert Young will co-star and Alexander Korda will produce the long-awaited opus in Technicolor . . . Arthur Murray is trying to get Johnny Coy from Paramount for the independently produced story of the impresario's life.

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READERS WRITE

(continued from page 4)

Sirs:

Heartfelt congratulations on your addition of Bernard Sobel to the staff of your magazine. And heartfelt congratulations on the October issue, which is tops.

ROBERT GARLAND
New York City

Sirs:

I'm mad as blazes at you for printing John Chapman's derogatory article on balletomanes. First of all, the article was not clever, and it did no one any good. Certainly it did the ballet and its followers a world of harm. Your purpose should be to encourage ballet attendance, not discourage it. We're used to papers on the type of the *Daily News* building up slime and tearing down anything cultural. But since when do you have to be partner to that sort of thing.

JENNIE SHULMAN
Brooklyn, New York

Sirs:

As a group of organized ballet lovers, we were appalled to find that *Dance* would lower itself to the extent of publishing an article as untrue, as vulgar and as insulting as John Chapman's *Those Ballet Audiences.*

Were Mr. Chapman the ballet lover he intends us to believe, he would make his criticisms in a serious and constructive manner, with a view to developing in both the ballet and the audiences those healthy and vital forces that do exist in fact.

Mr. Chapman seems overly preoccupied with sex. Surely there is nothing in a typical matinee audience of mothers, children, schoolgirls, office workers and ballet students that would lead one to believe that they are there to "smell up a good healthy session" as Mr. Chapman so vulgarly puts it. And then he resents the audience's enthusiasm. People who go to the ballet like it too much, they applaud too loudly for him to believe that they really like it.

One can but reach the conclusion that Mr. Chapman does not really like the ballet, and that he is not at all interested in the ballet audience. He simply is interested in producing an "amusing" commercial article.

RHODA EPSTEIN,
President of Balletiana,
New York City

Dance

VOLUME XX November, 1946 NUMBER 11

Rudolf Orthwine, Editor and Publisher

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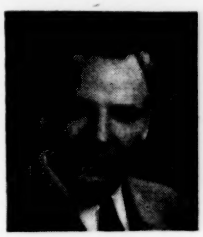
COVER: Nana Gollner, at present on tour with a new company, Ballet for America, is caught in a striking leap by photographer Alfredo Valente. Ballet for America makes its New York debut in January.

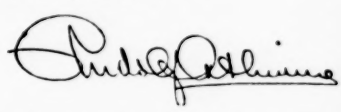
A WARNING—DEAD END



MANY of us who drive a car have gone through the process of exploring new roads in search of short-cuts to our destination. Along the way, many of us have encountered a sign reading "Warning, Dead End". I came across such a road once with the sign on the ground, a car lying on the railroad track below, and an ambulance removing the injured.

Today's domestic and world conditions remind me very much of that sign and of the danger behind it. We are in the second year of cessation of the hostilities which were to settle world strife, erase hatred, abolish despotism, and make for brotherly love, better living standards and universal understanding. But instead, we have greed and black markets everywhere. Distrust and the germ of hatred are still among the races. We are rushing full speed toward a Dead End. In international and national politics, in our local and international economies, in our private lives, we have begun to lay the blame anywhere but on ourselves.

It is time to think and to take inventory, to analyze our own actions and those of our leaders. We must be willing to sacrifice for the good of the future. We must drop whatever greedy motives we have and insist that others fall in line. On the international side, we must give peace a chance, we must see that unselfish individuals manage the United Nations. If we are sincere in wanting world-wide co-operation, we must abolish all national armed forces. Here at home we will have to adjust a fair living wage and fair selling price for everyone, outlaw the black market, exorbitant prices, and useless strikes. We must go back to work and produce to save our country and the rest of the world from economic disaster. Let us avoid the danger of the Dead End warning through more kindness and less hatred and greed. Let us have more faith in humanity and in our ability to bring about closer ties among the human family, thereby creating a lasting peace.



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Dance
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Symposium on the American Dance

THE EDITORS OF *Dance Magazine* asked a number of leading American dancers and choreographers to discuss the problems and the future of the dance in the ballet, modern, and musical fields. Their replies, quoted directly on the following pages, form a revealing cross-section of professional opinion today.

twelve renowned artists set forth their views on trends of the dance world

Bruno

PATRICIA BOWMAN

Patricia Bowman, free lance ballerina for the past ten years, has toured all America. She was trained by Michel Fokine, and has danced under Massine, Mordkin and Nijinska.

PARADOXICALLY, I believe that there is both too much and too little ballet. Dance has been liberally applied, almost as a mass-produced American product, to every musical on Broadway. Dancers have pirouetted and "modernized" to tunes of just about every romantic, popular composer.

Today, the country which once classified ballet as an effete pastime has wholeheartedly accepted it. Only in motion pictures has ballet been sadly neglected.

Yet, in my opinion, dancers and choreographers, swept along on this flood tide, do not always show to best advantage. Dance, liberated, "unfet-

(*continued on page* 35)

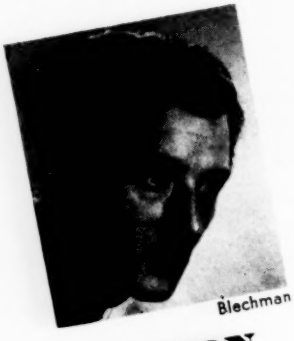
Romaine

WILLAM CHRISTENSEN

Willam Christensen is Artistic Director and principal male dancer of the San Francisco Ballet which he founded. He received his early training under the direction of Mascagno and Fokine.

THE OPPORTUNITY is close at hand for permanent dance companies. That is today's prospect. But what does the future hold for the hundreds of good dancers now being trained in American ballet schools? Perhaps there will be enough companies to employ these dancers; perhaps membership in a ballet company (even a state-subsidized one) will be apprenticeship to commercialization. It is easy to call to mind good dancers, even artists, who today are dancing in clubs, hotels, movies and musical shows. Such is the trend of modern choreography that the successful dance artist becomes not the eventual prima ballerina, or the premier danseur, but the night club

(*continued on page* 35)


Blechman

ANTON DOLIN

Premier danseur of classical ballet, Anton Dolin is now touring the country as guest artist with the Original Ballet Russe, co-starring with Alicia Markova, leading classical ballerina.

I BELIEVE THAT THE FUTURE of the American dance lies in becoming not more but less American. By that I mean that the American dance should not tend to become too local in subject matter and approach, but should veer toward the international. The dance, by nature, is one of the most basic and universal of the arts. Our American dance should get out of America and into the world. It should assimilate European culture and develop the best in foreign and domestic influences.

Ballet groups should actually travel. A beginning has already been made along these lines and it should be carried further. That way, dance com-

(*continued on page* 36)

Basch

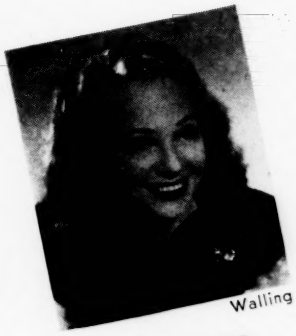
FREDERIC FRANKLIN

Celebrated for character roles, Frederic Franklin has danced with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo since 1937, *and is now acting as Maitre de Ballet for the company.*

IN REGARD TO TRENDS in ballets, we still have demands for the classical ballets, and especially for the ballet *Scheherazade,* which cannot be dropped from the repertoire because of its great popularity among all kinds of audiences. It is a known fact that local managers, if they notice the advance sale lagging on a certain night, will write immediately asking us to give *Scheherazade,* so that the sales may go up. The modern ballets are also extremely popular, interspersed with the others. The main demand is for a well-balanced program, with something for everyone on it.

Regarding the problems of young American dancers who really wish to

(*continued on page* 36)



Walling

MARIA GAMBARELLI

After several years as premiere danseuse at the Metropolitan, Maria Gambarelli toured America with her own company. She formed the original Rockettes at the Roxy Theatre.

I AM A LITTLE TIRED of that school of thought which attributes everything that is fine in ballet to Russia. Russian ballet has been living off the reputation which the fine company of Diaghileff made for itself thirty years ago. Four-fifths of the Russian names which adorn the rosters of ballet companies nowadays are inventions by which American, English and other nationalities protect themselves from the prejudice which still exists in many centers against Anglo-Saxon and Latin names in the art of Terpsichore. We have the well-known examples of Alicia Markova, whose real name is Alice Marks; Anton Dolin, born Patrick Healey-Kaye; Vera Zorina, who was

(*continued on page* 38)

Alexander

MARTHA GRAHAM

Martha Graham and her company, leading exponents of modern dance in America, may tour Europe this year. "Serpent Heart", her new dance, will be featured by the group this season.

LATELY WE HEAR on every hand that there is "a great dance vogue" in America. I hope I will be forgiven if I say I have very little faith in vogues. Which is not to say that I am unaware of the really wonderful response of American audiences to the dance. That is real, I believe. But I would like to go on record with another very earnest belief: It is no vogue. I would like to think—and I do—that America had come into its birthright at last—its birthright as a dancing nation, loving, knowing and understanding the dance.

This is no vogue. This has been building as steadily as the country has been building. Our long-suffering ances-

(*continued on page* 39)

LA MERI

La Meri, choreographer and performer of the ethnologic dance, has studied with native dancers throughout the world. She is now directing the Ethnologic Dance Center in New York City.

IN A RECENT ISSUE of Dance Magazine, Walter Terry offered a practical campaign for the dance in this country. In this article he set forth many of the problems which face the dance, many aspects which can be stressed and developed, and sketched in the role that this art could play in American life, were it given an opportunity to grow and expand along indicated lines.

After reading Mr. Terry's article, it would seem that what could be said has been said. Yet the subject is a big one and like the country in which it strives, the dance has many aspects. Since my opinions are part of a symposium, let me, then, attack the subject

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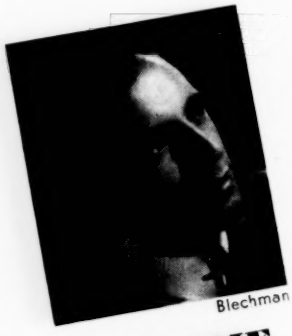

JEROME ROBBINS

Achieving fame as a choreographer with "Fancy Free", Jerome Robbins staged the dances for "Billion Dollar Baby" and "On The Town". "Facsimile", his latest work, was premiered by Ballet Theatre.

THE FUNCTION OF DANCE is the same as the function of any one of our cultural arts, a question of interpretation by the artist for society. It depends on what we want to interpret: life around us, or the form of beauty we hope some day our life will achieve. Dance in America seems to be headed mainly toward theatrical dance. We are interested in interpreting events that the audience knows about and participates in, in a way that it will understand.

The American ballets are primarily theatrical pieces. Their influence on Broadway shows, on the musical comedy stage, has been tremendous. Like a young mushroom harvest, they have

(*continued on page* 43)

FLORENCE ROGGE

Over forty million people have seen popularized ballet as staged by Florence Rogge, associate producer at the Radio City Music Hall and versatile director of the theatre's corps de ballet.

IN RECENT YEARS, the ballet has worked hard for its deserved place in the sun in America, and I know that with sincere and judicious artistic handling, it will continue to retain its vitality.

I have been thrilled to watch both the growth of dance popularity in America and the development of ballets by American choreographers. We at the Music Hall have felt a real satisfaction in seeing audience response become more lively, more sympathetic in its reaction to ballet dancing, and it is more than gratifying to me to see the work of such native dance choreographers as Michael Kidd, who was himself some years ago in our ballet group

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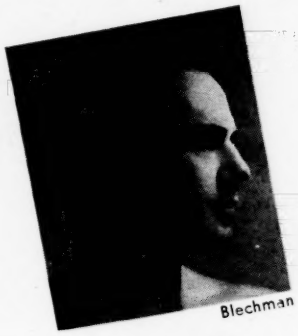

Blechman

TED SHAWN

With Ruth St. Denis, his wife, Ted Shawn founded the Denishawn School, which has vitally influenced modern dance in America. He organized and now directs the Jacob's Pillow Festival.

I HAVE SEEN in more than thirty years' continuous touring of this country and in teaching all over the country during that same period, a tremendous awakening of dance consciousness on the part of the entire American public.

From now on, this growth, while perhaps not so sensational and dramatic, should be steady and sure. The public, having become more educated in the dance as a great art, having seen more and more of the greatest dancers, is demanding a higher standard of performance than ever before.

The rising quality of dance in Broadway productions will continue, and dance will become an essential part of

(*continued on page* 45)

Blechman

HELEN TAMIRIS

Helen Tamiris, formerly a leading figure in modern dance, is now an outstanding choreographer. She staged the dances for "Show Boat", "Annie Get Your Gun" and "Up In Central Park".

THE THEATRE NEEDS MORE choreographers, not only for the musical comedy stage, but for the legitimate play. Audiences are beginning to demand a more imaginative theatre, less dependent on the spoken word, placed in a three-walled, one-set drawing room. Producers are a little more amenable to scripts that include music and movement. Some playwrights, therefore, are beginning to be less timorous about thinking in terms of those dramatic and colorful elements of theatre that have been missing from our legitimate stage.

Most of the new choreographers who are working in the theatre today come from the ballet and concert fields. In

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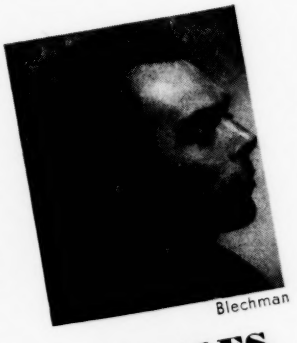


Blechman

CHARLES WEIDMAN

Charles Weidman is co-founder of the Humphrey-Weidman troupe, the first modern dance group to give a New York concert. He is now doing the choreography for "If The Shoe Fits".

IT IS A LITTLE DIFFICULT for a choreographer or a dancer to know just what will be the problems in dance for next year or for the future. The impressario and the manager should be in a much better position to answer that question. I would like to speak, rather, about the trends which I think the dance will be taking.

All art progresses because of the strong and original innovations which talented artists contribute. Yet no matter how striking or revolutionary a work may be, the measure of its success is in its reception by the public.

We see at the present time both ballet and modern companies, even though using different mediums of ex-

(*continued on page* 46)

"THE JOLSON STORY"

Picture Surveys

Evelyn Keyes rehearses with Jack Cole for a sequence in Columbia's "The Jolson Story."

Above and right: Miss Keyes in the "Liza" number from the film.

Jolson and Keeler dance together again on the screen in the persons of Larry Parks and Evelyn Keyes

IN 1934, Al Jolson and his then wife Ruby Keeler appeared together for the first and only time in a Warner musical, *Go Into Your Dance.* Now, for its production of *The Jolson Story,* Columbia has teamed the fictional film versions of the Jolsons in a reenactment of a song-and-dance sequence from that picture—with typical Hollywood variations. Jolson, this time, is played by Larry Parks, with the help of the sound man who has dubbed in Jolson's real singing voice. Evelyn Keyes is coyly unidentified as Miss Keeler, going by the name of Julie Benson. Nor is *Go Into Your Dance* credited as an original Warner production by the present producers, Columbia Pictures. However, Miss Keyes and Mr. Parks do actually manage to dance in *The Jolson Story,* both of them for the first time, in an exciting number staged by Jack Cole to the music of *A Quarter to Nine.* E.G.

Above and left: Evelyn Keyes and Larry Parks hoof it together to Jack Cole's choreography in "A Quarter to Nine" from the same picture.

WHAT OF THE LIBRETTIST?

ballet is sadly lacking in literary content in the opinion of one observer

by MAURICE STOLLER

(Maurice Stoller is now working with "The Broadway Muse", a group of dancer-actors newly organized to produce dance-plays from a repertory of modernized classics which he has adapted. A former staff member of the "New York Post" and "World-Telegram", he has been guest drama critic for the "Morning Telegraph". He has staged television dances, and written several plays.)

RECENTLY, after witnessing a three-hour ballet performance, of which I enjoyed only twenty minutes, I asked myself what was wrong. I am a ballet fan. I should have enjoyed every minute of those three hours.

In trying to find the answer, I dipped into the 3,000-year-old history of the dance. I talked with some of our leading purveyors of ballet, and I studied the critical reviews. At the risk of sticking my neck out in the face of sell-out performances, I submit that there is a serious vitamin deficiency in the libretto department. Most of the current ballets in repertory have either a poor story, a dated story, or no story.

Of course there are those who contend that literary content is like lead in a ballet slipper. Lucia Chase, executive director of the Ballet Theatre, feels that the ballets with plots are the least effective. Choreographer John Taras, who is responsible for *Graziana,* a visualization of a Mozart violin concerto, is decidedly against literature in the dance. The S. Hurok office impartially observes that the libretto plays a very minor, even a minus role, in the modern ballets.

On the other hand, there are those who champion the story ballets. Here is what the Marquis de Cuevas, head of the recent Ballet International, says on the subject: "Notwithstanding the beauty of the grouping and harmony of the movement in the abstract *Brahms Variations* of Mme. Nijinska, the attention of the public was held more by the little episodes unfolded in her production of Moussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition,* which brought to life, as it were, a collection of beautiful prints. Again, with Fokine, it is his story ballets that won for him the greatest acclaim." The Marquis regards Edward Caton's *Sebastian,* a well-plotted tragedy, as "the best constructed of the Ballet International productions."

Mr. Caton, also a champion of the story ballets, has an interesting footnote on ballet in opera at the Met. He says that many of the operas in which ballet is integral to the plot are presented without any dance sequences, as in *Faust* and *Le Cid,* or else the ballet is cut to the bone, as in *Thais,* where seven dance sequences are indicated but only one is left in. Yet the audiences, he avers, are ever eager for the ballets. In a production of *Carmen,* which I witnessed, the ballet in the last act was enthusiastically received, so much so that the leading dancers, Irene Hawthorne and Leon Varkas, matched curtain call for curtain call with the brilliant Carmen, Rise Stevens. Lincoln Kirstein, dance historian, suggests that the Met direction has never wanted an excellent ballet. Can it be they fear the ballet as a rival of the singers?

Composer, choreographer, painter and star dominate the ballet scene down the years. Taglioni, Pavlova, Nijinsky, Stravinsky, Bakst and Fokine each in turn took center stage. Today the spotlight is on De Mille, Robbins, Tudor. Today the choreographer is king. Is it possible that he regards the poet as a contender for the ballet crown? But where is the poet? The pages of ballet history rarely mention a librettist.

Take this representative program of a hundred years ago: *"The Return of the Crusaders,* a grand pantomime ballet in five acts, by Didelot (the choreographer), music by Cavos and Sushkov, scenery by Kondratiev and Dranchet, final scene by Conoppi, fights by Gomburos, machines by Burset, costumes by Babini. Principal dancers . . . etc., etc." Not very different from the typical credits found on today's ballet programs, with never a mention of author or source of text.

Texts for ballets still in repertory—such as *Petrouchka, Swan Lake, Les Sylphides, Afternoon of a Faun, Rites of Spring, The Firebird*—were written by choreographer, composer or scene designer. One notable exception is *Giselle,* with libretto credited to Theophile Gautier, French author. The procedure usually is for the choreographer to shape his dance continuity to fit music already written, as with Nijinsky's *Afternoon of a Faun,* or else a composer is commissioned to do a score after an idea by a choreographer, as with the Tudor-Weill Laing *Judgement of Paris,* and the Robbins, Bernstein *Fancy Free.*

Let us examine sample texts by composer and choreographer. An excerpt from Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* reads: "A puppet is suddenly released, who by cascades of diabolic arpeggios exasperates the patience of the orchestra, which in its turn answers him by menacing fanfares. There follows a frightful racket, which, coming to its paroxysm, ends by the sad, plaintive fading-away of the unfortunate doll . . .". The synopsis of Tudor's text for *Gala Performance* is as follows: "Three world-famous ballerinas from Russia, Italy and France are presented at a gala performance, which features the fact that this is the first joint appearance the three stars are making."

In the first instance, the images and allusions are obviously musical. No story line is discernible. In the second example the text is no more than an idea for a variety turn, and the production, straining for cleverness,

(continued on page 47)

MILADY MILADA

by PHILIP K. SCHEUER

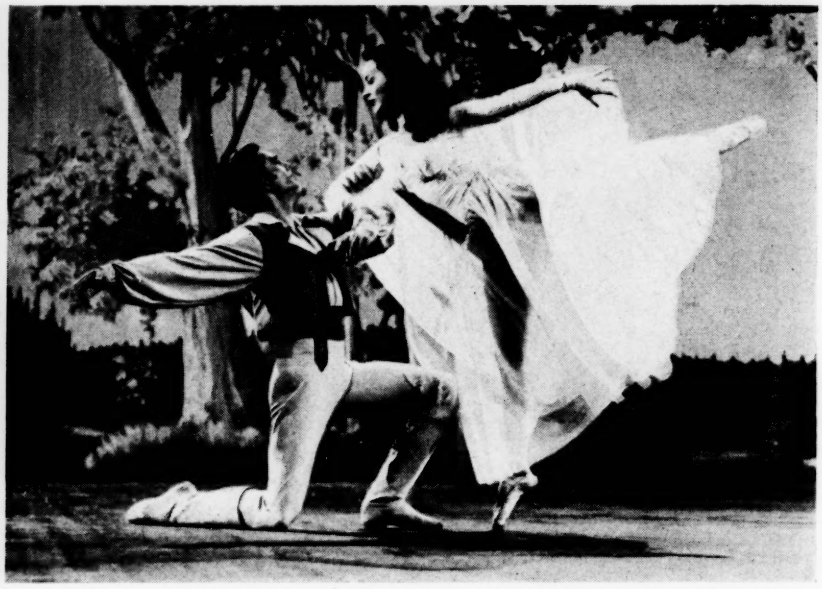
IF MLADOVA HAD EVER danced in an *Oklahoma!* company (the closest she came to it was in *Rodeo,* another Agnes de Mille "Western") she would have felt right at home. She was born twenty-four years ago in Oklahoma City—a happenstance that has won her, around the Warner Bros. lot where she has been loitering, the kidding but affectionate sobriquet of "Okie."

She was well on her way toward becoming a ballerina when she departed her home State ten years ago. It was about the last place you'd expect such an artist to be from; but even Oklahoma provides certain facilities for training, and Mladova had taken advantage of them. Too much advantage, at first. The fact is that little Milada Mraz, as she was known then, got off on the wrong foot. A course in acrobatics, begun at the tender age of four as a builder-upper after whooping cough, did such cruel things to her legs that when she switched at eight to ballet it took two years for her instructor, Fronie Asher, to make them look normal and behave properly again.

In 1933 Milada was considered presentable enough to "audition" for visiting celebrities, and she lost no time in doing it at every opportunity. Nini Theilade was sufficiently interested to invite her to Europe; two years afterward, Massine urged her to get there by any means she could, study with Mme. Olga Preobajenska of Paris and the Maryinsky, and then "see me again."

Being a pupil of the famous Preoba-

Typical Hollywood glamor pose is assumed by Milada Mladova for finale of "Night and Day".



Left: George Zoritch and Milada Mladova in the Begin the Beguine finale from Warners' "Night and Day". Right: Zoritch and Mladova have principal roles in the Primavera Ballet from "Escape Me Never".

jenska was a thrill, but Milada had her shade of heartaches, too. They laughed when, the very first day, she reported to class in the frilled and ruffled practice costume of the American dancing school. Everyone else wore plain black tights. The poor kid made a second faux pas by ensconcing herself among the professional group instead of the beginners (after all, hadn't the great Massine himself all but promised to sponsor her future career?).

Milada's confidence proved premature. She showed up badly—and knew it. Next morning, as she tells it today, she slunk into the back row with the beginners. But if she was discouraged, Mme. Preobajenska was not. In six months—the interval allowed to beat the red hand around the clock to Massine's arrival—Milada had been coaxed, cajoled and chastised into becoming the respectable equivalent of a danseuse. She joined Massine and the Ballet Russe in Monte Carlo in February, 1937, and remained with him until the summer of 1943.

"I realize now," she says, "that if Massine hadn't just happened to be organizing a new company I never would have made the grade. But he saw something in me he liked" (which, parenthetically, shouldn't have been hard to do) "and in time I studied and progressed." Her lyric style, she believes, was best displayed in *The Three-Cornered Hat, St. Francis, Serenade,* Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* and particularly the prelude to *Les Sylphides.*

However, her most gratifying popular success was to be attained in the New Opera Company's *Merry Widow,* in which, with Chris Volkoff as partner and a vivid rose spotlight for a halo, she swayed through the notorious strains of the waltz to tumultuous applause. In this imaginative George Balanchine concept, the pair stood out against the circling silhouettes of the entire corps de ballet.

"*The Merry Widow* did the most for me of any production," she declares. "It was so well choreographed and our number was so perfectly placed in it." With Volkoff she doubled into the Waldorf-Astoria—her first ballroom essay—and later appeared in two musical comedies: *Allah Be Praised,* a flop, and *Sadie Thompson,* again with Volkoff.

Milada Mraz's musician-father was Czech, not Russian. A Ballet Russe bigwig, sold on the potency of "ova" and "ska" as box-office suffixes, supervised the alteration of Mraz to Mladova. He changed it practically over Milada's very live body. The Russian connotation, she says, has caused her embarrassment ever since—especially as, being very suggestible, she would find herself contracting an accent that went with the name whenever she was around the bona-fide article for more than five minutes at a time. As soon as she caught herself

Milada Mraz of Oklahoma City and the Ballet Russe is today glamorous Milada Mladova of Hollywood

with a dialect, she would drop it like a hot potato. But too often the damage would be done. "Didn't you have an accent a moment ago?" her vis-a-vis would gasp, wide-eyed. Milada could only blush; explaining was useless.

And does she believe she would have come as far as she has if her name had been billed as Smith or Jones—or Mraz?

"How far have I come?" she shrugged, glancing around at the walls of a Warner Bros. office. It was one of those "warm" Southern California afternoons when the humidity that doesn't officially exist out there leaves a fellow wilted and nerveless; but Milada looked like a cool bronze nymph . . . a nymph with just the suggestion of a mortal's freckles. Her red-brown hair fell loosely, framing the green eyes and fine voluptuous mouth.

"Certainly," she agreed, "Milada Mladova would not be a good name for publicity or on an American theatre marquee—excepting for ballet, that is. I would like to act, yes; to mix acting and dancing; because I don't believe it is possible to have a big part unless it's a speaking part. In the year I have been here at the studio I have studied all the drama and diction I could soak up, besides continuing my ballet work with Mme. Nijinska. But so far—dramatically, I mean—I've had just one small scene, in *Escape Me Never*, with Errol Flynn."

Besides this dubious bounty, she has been permitted to dance in two Warner features—*Night and Day* and that same *Escape Me Never*. In the glorified Cole Porter biography she performed the beguine with George Zoritch, a friendly figure from Ballet Russe days, and in *Escape Me Never* a story ballet with Zoritch and Betee Bryson. Called *Primavera* and directed by LeRoy Prinz to Korngold music, it is supposed to parallel the dilemma of Flynn, who is torn between two damsels played by Ida Lupino and Eleanor Parker—but Milada wasn't very sanguine about movie audiences getting the point. "Unless, maybe, they saw *Oklahoma!* on the stage," she smiled.

Meanwhile the beautiful Okie with the Russian name was sitting out the remainder of her contract, in Hollywood—to which, willy-nilly, she intended to bring her family from New York. All except kid sister Fiala, who, though already off to a promising start in "Met" ballet, has managed to resist all tampering with the good Czech name of Mraz.

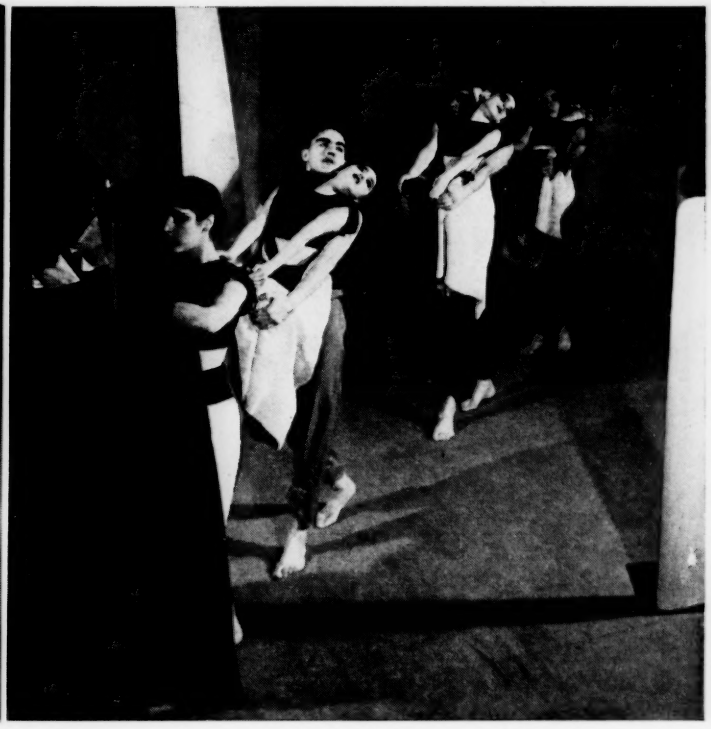
Left: Mladova danced with Ballet Russe before going to Hollywood. Right: Zoritch, Mladova, and Bettee Bryson relax on set between scenes of "Escape Me Never" in which the ballet is an important sequence.

two of Martha Graham's recent dance dramas are now important features of her repertoire

"APPALACHIAN SPRING"

The frontier community welcomes the husbandman and bride, Erick Hawkins, Martha Graham, bottom. Hawkins dances his triumph over the land, top.

Martha Graham has arranged her dancers in archaic formation to represent the race memory of man.



The psychological theme of many resurrections and deaths is reflected in this Death Processional.

May O'Donnell, as She of the Earth, dances in a green cloak which symbolizes life and fertility.

"DARK MEADOW"

IN THESE UNUSUAL PICTURES, Arnold Eagle, noted photographer, has captured the vitality of movement in two dances by Martha Graham. *Appalachian Spring* and *Dark Meadow,* acclaimed by critics and audiences in the past, will be featured by the Graham company this season. In *Appalachian Spring,* the action centers around a young husbandman and his bride who build a home in a frontier settlement. The spring celebrated represents the pioneer days of young America. As in all of Graham's dance dramas, the emphasis is on the dancing as a medium of expressing universal characterization rather than any specific, localized "story". *Dark Meadow* is a more abstract composition, presenting the search of mankind for a reassuring faith, its eternal quest for the meaning of life.

BROADWAY dance trends

by WALTER TERRY

Graphic House

Bill Callahan, dancing star of "Call Me Mister", taps out the title sequence by John Wray.

WHICH IS IT going to be, hoofing or ballet? Or both? The prophets of Broadway dance simply do not agree, for one will tell you that the union of ballet with musical comedy is all but dissolved and another will aver that ballet has hardly commenced its conquest of the musical comedy stage. Oddly enough, both prophets are probably right, to a degree. Since producers have generally thought of ballet usage in terms of a specific pattern, it stands to reason that the pattern is becoming hackneyed and a change inevitable; the first reaction is "'ballet must be dropped". It is equally inevitable that someone in the producing business will ultimately discover that ballet (or some form of expressional dance) can be put to uses other than "the dream sequence" or big production numbers which play havoc with the continuity of the show.

A Gallup Poll on the subject of Broadway dance might provide facts and figures on the opinions of theater people and theatergoers, but it would not state what is wrong with Broadway dance, nor why. By way of unearthing clues to the solution of the problem of ballet on Broadway, I talked with two dance personalities, each with a different viewpoint but both with a concern for the future of dance. They were Bill Callahan, tap dance star of *Call Me Mister,* and Helen Tamiris, choreographer of *Show Boat* and *Annie Get Your Gun.*

Mr. Callahan, who provides some of the brightest moments in the GI musical, is by no means anti-ballet, for not only does he admire the superior ballet dancing of Maria Karnilova and David Nillo in the same show, but he himself inserts a goodly amount of balletic virtuosity into his tap routines and, surprisingly enough, it is the ballet aspect which gives distinction and excitement to his dancing. Yet, Bill Callahan believes that ballet in musical comedy is but a fad and that it lacks the "punch" of tap. He is right, of course, for ballet does lack, as it is now used, the immediacy of tap. Tap is a friendly form of dance, performed for the immediate delight of the audience and usually unconcerned with the establishing of any emotion other than joy or good spirits. Unless it is a tour de force solo, ballet is generally used as a dramatic form in which the dancers not only establish physical patterns, but also mood, character and plot development; hence the "punch" is longer in arriving.

Helen Tamiris, who left the field of the concert dance to become one of Broadway's most successful choreographers, forecasts a lull in the use of ballet and modern dance in the musical shows, but only a lull. One of the difficulties, she believes, is, paradoxically, the success of ballet in musical comedy, for the success has led to usurpation and jealousy. Playwrights, directors, stars and others associated with a Broadway production are irritated by the sudden success of the intruder, by the unaccustomed squeals of errant balletomanes and by the tendency of the successful choreographer to distort the book for choreographic purposes or to take over the whole stage for the presentation of a ballet. Because Miss Tamiris believes that these factors of jealousy and usurpation are stifling ballet on Broadway, she strives, in her own contributions to musical comedy, to make modest use of dance and to be certain that her ballets are neither interludes nor alternatives to the drama but part and parcel of the book itself.

Blame for the difficulties besetting ballet in the musical comedy field, Miss Tamiris lays at the feet, not of the choreographer, but of the theater. "Ultimately," she says, "the choreographer must become part of the body politic of the theater, when playwrights feel free to write creatively and use dance or poetry or the vernacular as their creation demands." And Miss Tamiris does not believe that the playwright will be truly free until the false barriers between musical comedy and the so-called legitimate theater are destroyed and the right to use any or all of the arts in a single theater-creation is established.

It is obvious, I think, that Bill Callahan is perfectly right in assuming that ballet as it is customarily used in musical comedy today is but a fad, and that Helen Tamiris is right in believing that dance, following a lull, will return in greater strength to the legitimate theater after the theater itself has undergone a change. But there are still further aspects to the problem of ballet on Broadway and they are concerned

the ballet vogue in musical comedy has hit a temporary decline as tap dancing replaces the pointed toe behind the footlights

Vandamm

Above: Ethel Merman as Annie Oakley and Daniel Nagrin as Chief Iron Tail are the principals in the Indian Adoption Dance from "Annie Get Your Gun", choreographed by Helen Tamiris. Below: Harold Lang and Jane Deering dance the Barnaby Beach number in "Three to Make Ready", staged by Robert Sidney.

Graphic House

with the immediate difficulties.

"When I Grow Too Old to Dream" is a song with a warning for musical comedy producers. For theatergoers and dancers have grown too old to dream all of the time, and the possibilities of the "dream ballet" are pretty well exhausted. It is high time to wake up and permit ballet to be wide-awake also. Here, then, is the crux of the matter. Playwrights or producers or librettists and other collaborators in the musical comedy must singly and collectively arrive at the realization that ballet or modern dance can perform many functions: it can serve as a transitional device to unite scene with scene, as Jerome Robbins has so brilliantly proved in his ballets for Broadway; it can be threaded in with song and dialogue as in the Tamiris collaborations; it can stand alone as a dramatic entity as in the Agnes de Mille contributions to Broadway; it can give order and style and life to an otherwise mainly pictorial scene such as "Barnaby Beach" in *Three to Make Ready* or "Sunday in Cicero Falls" from *Bloomer Girl;* and, ideally, it can supplant dialogue and song when the emotional pitch or the dramatic demands are so intense that words do not suffice. Permit ballet to establish its range of action on Broadway and it will not be viewed merely as a "dream sequence" fad.

Audiences too will have something to say about the fate of ballet in musical comedy. They have seen superior dancing and, I believe, they have consciously or otherwise raised the standards of their dance demands. They would probably not be pleased with the return of chorus boys and girls who could do little more than parade about the stage. It is perfectly

(continued on page 52)

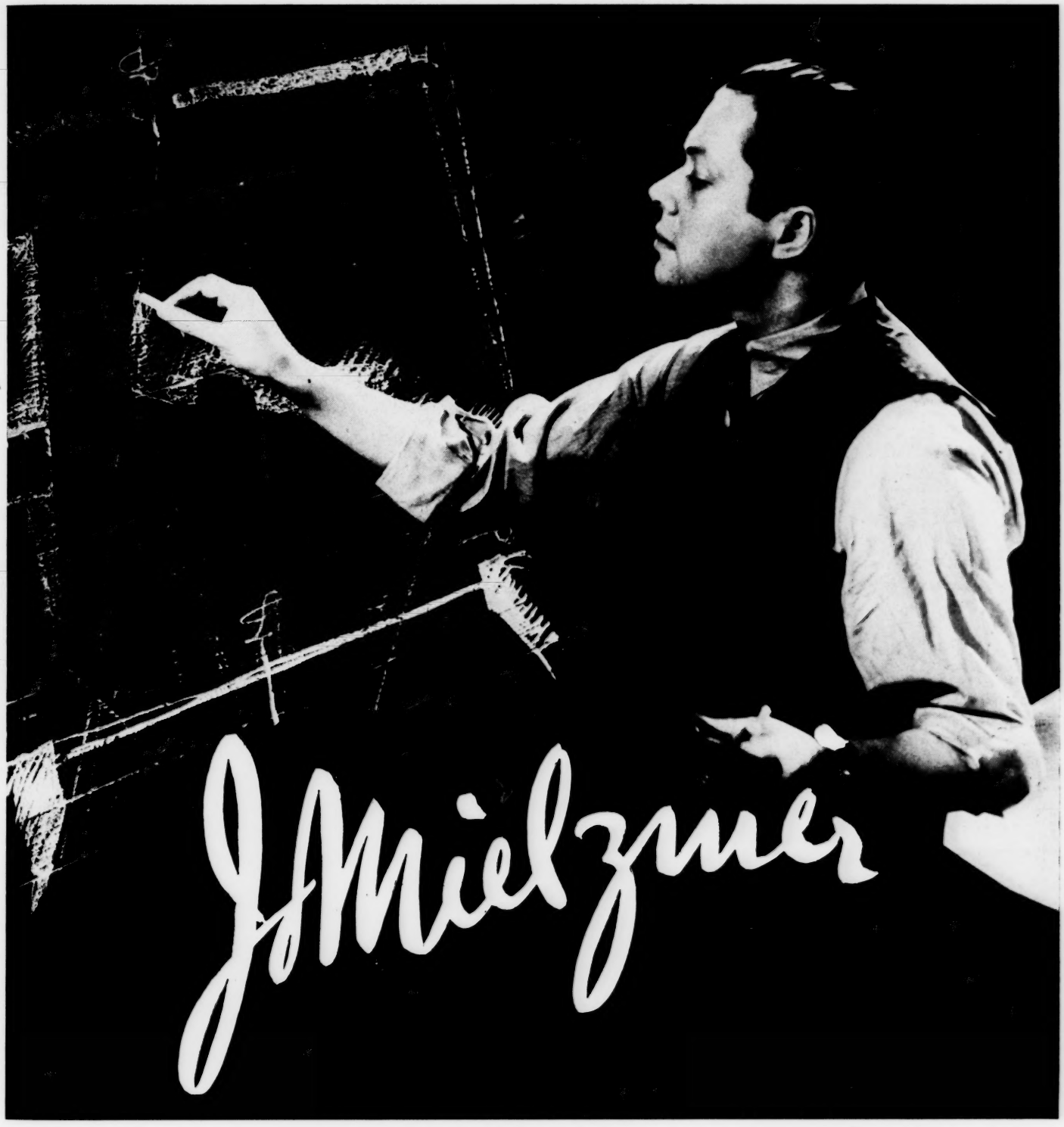
a prominent designer comments on his ballet and Broadway settings

Left: Mielziner sets the boisterous finale of "Annie Get Your Gun" with Ethel Merman as Annie Oakley, Ray Middleton as Frank Butler.

Left: The set for Ballet Theatre's "Pillar of Fire" reflects the sombre, emotional tone of the dance, as the lighting shifts with the action.

SETS BY..

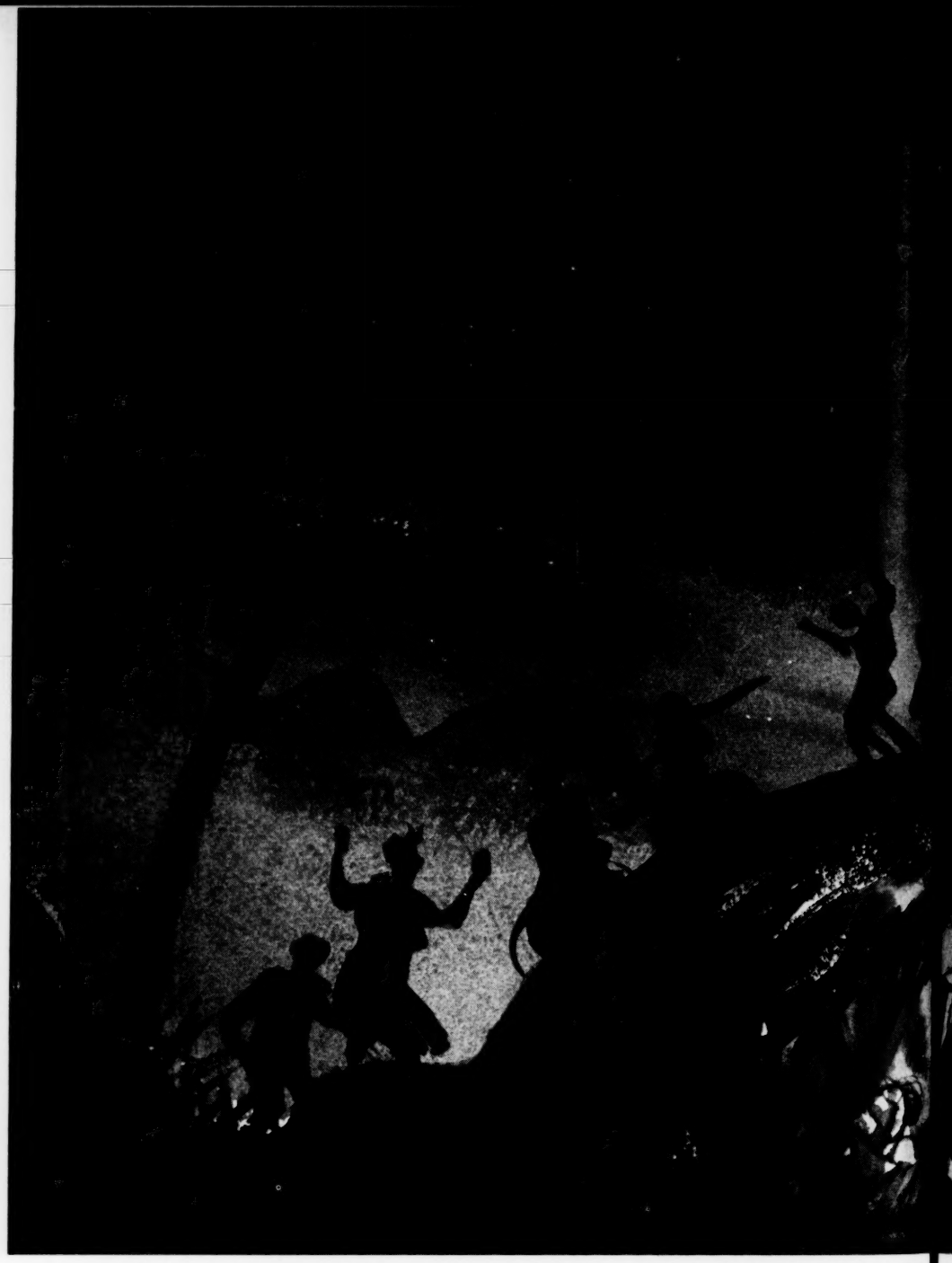
This rococo ballroom setting is in sharp contrast to wild west scenes of "Annie Get Your Gun". Dancers are Betty Anne Nyman, Kenny Bowers.



SINCE 1924, "Sets and Lighting by Mielziner" have figured importantly on Broadway theatre programs. This season Jo Mielziner is creating the settings for *Happy Birthday* and for the operatic version of *Street Scene,* for which he designed the original Broadway production in 1929. His most recent stage settings have been for *Annie Get Your Gun, Carousel, Dream Girl, Glass Menagerie,* and *Carib Song.*

Mielziner's father was a famous American portrait painter, his mother an American journalist. Born in Paris, he attended high school here for two years, then began his training at the Art Students League and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. A scholarship abroad was interrupted by service in the Marine Corps during the first

Mielziner's costume sketches for "Pillar of Fire" include, top, Maiden Lady Out Walking, and bottom, Man Friend of Family.



Mielziner's vivid setting for the Wake scene of Katherine Dunham's "Carib Song" was called

World War. After the war, Mielziner turned to stage designing. To learn his trade, he became a member of the Bonstell stock company, and spent a season as bit actor and assistant stage manager with the Theatre Guild. Later, he served an apprenticeship with Robert Edmond Jones. "If you work in the interpretative side of the theatre," he advises, "you learn the proper relation between actor and scenery. You don't make the mistake of thinking of scenery as a picture." A designer must consider the performer's viewpoint. "For a three-dimensional, realistic play, a two-dimensional set would be uninteresting, but for a stylized ballet, a flat design would be good."

Tudor's ballet, *Pillar of Fire,* was the last production for which Mielziner designed costumes. Since then he has limited himself to sets and lighting. He stresses the importance of lighting, and directs this phase of production for all the stage settings he undertakes. "Old-

one of last season's outstanding stage designs, and Miss Dunham is using it again this year.

fashioned border lighting is the worst sort for dancers," he feels, because it "minimizes the third dimension and slows up action." He showed the flexibility of modern, controlled lighting in *Pillar of Fire,* where he lit one part of the set and then another as the action shifted. He focussed a different quality of light on the performer from the background, which was kept subservient. Surprisingly, this noted scenic designer feels that lighting and costuming are more vital to the ballet than stage sets. "If I were in charge of a ballet production, and could afford only two essentials," he says, "I would eliminate sets and use only lighting and costumes."

Jo Mielziner strongly opposes Hollywood's influence on the American theatre. "The theatre can't and doesn't want to compete with the camera lens. The more we use imagination and abstraction, the more creative and theatrical the quality of the stage will be." DOROTHY BARRET

More costume designs for "Pillar of Fire" represent, top, a Lover - in - Experience Girl, and, bottom, the Eldest Sister.

by **EDWIN DENBY**

Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and Ballet for America inaugurate the fall dance season

THE BALLET RUSSE DE MONTE Carlo opened in New York September 4th in a distracted state with too little illusion of grace or style. During the course of its twelve-day season at the City Center the company had brighter moments (notably *Serenade, Concerto Barocco, Ballet Imperial* when Marie Jeanne danced it) and the big news was the dancing of Ruthanna Boris, who showed she deserved further ballerina parts. But the disappointments of the season remained too great. The repertory had been exposed to view in a ragged state to ragged music; Danilova owing to a knee injury hadn't appeared at all; Tallchief, injured too, had had to stop dancing after a few days; and the only novelty had been Ruth Page's *The Bells*. Such a string of misfortunes, whether you blame it on the theater jinx that dogs all treatments of Poe (*The Bells* in this case) or blame it on errors of management, was disheartening to watch.

The management had gambled on opening with only two weeks of rehearsal. The company looked tired out without having had time to get into form. Some dancers hadn't recovered the spring they lost practicing on a concrete floor during the summer season in Hollywood. Others were insecure in new parts. The orchestra muddled and dawdled; Mr. Boutnikoff, the conductor, coated the scores with schmalz, including Stravinsky's. And there was no time to correct the stage lighting. Two weeks more of rehearsals might well have saved the situation and saved the management's face.

Danilova

A second gamble the management lost was one on its great ballerina. Just before opening, the overworked company gave an out-of-town preview of *The Bells,* and after a six-hour bus ride Danilova was asked to dance without time properly to rest and to warm up. On the management's part this was inviting bad luck; and it was at the preview that Danilova hurt herself.

But the company's misfortune in presenting *The Bells* wasn't even a gamble. Miss Page had produced the piece in Chicago last spring and it was open to inspection then. *The Bells*—choreography by Ruth Page, music by Milhaud, decor by Noguchi—claims in a pretentious program note that it "parallels the psychological development" of Poe's well-known poem. Incidentally, the program doesn't bother to quote the poem correctly.

The Bells is a piece that goes on for half an hour being puerile in public. First there is a good deal of blithe maidenhood on toe. Then a young man in yellow comes in and the heroine and he have a nice long wedding. After a while, the corps waves some cloth between them and they look unhappy. In due time enter the King of the Ghouls, a young man with a headdress. Our hero abandons his bride to stamp around with the newcomer, and this offends her. She takes to an umbrella. Everybody suffers more and more and works hard at it. By now everybody is tangled up in black streamers and in each other and so eventually everybody gets down on the floor except the King of the Ghouls, who after breaking up one happy home, still stands menacing the audience. The program book says this indicates "Beauty divorced from Truth and . . . the Moral Sense."

Not that *The Bells* is incompetent in its own manner. Cut down to ten minutes it would be an unusually good stage show at a movie palace and would have an immense success. It is a good stage show because it has lots of different steps, difficult lifts, pretty lineups, smooth transitions, an anodyne story, and even a dash of what in stage shows passes for modern dance. No doubt its stereotype dance ideas and its puerile expressive passages are never anything but girlishly cute; its characters gesticulate in cliches of love and despair, its dances beat time to the music and have no surge or freedom of dance rhythm. But that is what the audience in a movie house expects of the stage show. It is only the pretentious insistence with which *The Bells* keeps up its triviality for half an hour that isn't good form in a movie house, and that wouldn't be allowed in one, either.

In ballet neither pretentiousness nor triviality is good form and the management shouldn't allow them. Even a good stage show is not a good ballet. It is because the good dance execution of *The Bells* and the celebrity of its collaborators might mislead, that it is necessary to point out the nature of the work. Otherwise, out of deference to Miss Page's many efforts for ballet in this country, one would have preferred to pass it off with a joke.

Night Shadow

To Poe lovers in the dance public, not *The Bells,* but the mysteriousness of Balanchine's *Night Shadow*—a novelty of last season—is recommended. Mysterious is the inter-action of its elements: the vapid ballroom dances; the winsome exhibition numbers that have a perverse and cruel undertone; the elaborate, encircling artifices of the coquette's pas de deux; the directness and space of the sleepwalking scene; the massed mime chorus in unison at the end. The progress of the piece is "romantic"—it is disconcerting, absurd and disproportionate; but its effect when it is over is powerful and exact.

(*continued on page* 51)

Fred Fehl

Above: Marie Jeanne and Frederic Franklin star in Balanchine's "Baiser de la Fee". Left to right, the Misses Seaver, Wilde, Weaver, Chouteau, and Tyven.

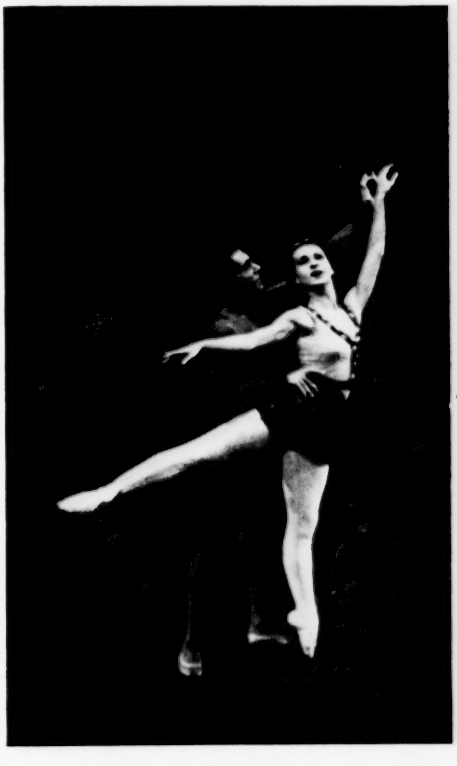
Below: Kathryn Lee dances in "The Gentleman Chooses a Bride", from repertoire of Ballet for America, choreographed by Boris Romanoff.

Alfredo Valente

Below: Frederic Franklin and Nikita Talin have leads in "The Bells", a new ballet by Ruth Page, which is a fantasy based upon the poem of Edgar Allen Poe.

Larry Colwell

Fred Fehl

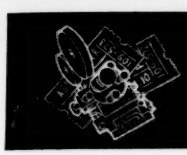


Above: Nikita Talin, Ruthanna Boris interpret the music of Bach in Monte Carlo's "Concerto Barocco". Choreography is by Balanchine.

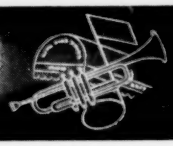
Left: Ann Miller taps a number in Columbia's "Thrill of Brazil". Choreography for this production is by Nick Castle and Eugene Loring.

Above: Johnny Coy, Dorothy Babbs appear in the spectacular "Hit the Bottle" dance from Republic's musical "Earl Carroll Sketchbook".

Left: Vera-Ellen and Charles Smith dance in the fantasy-swing ballet from 20th Century-Fox's Technicolor film "Three Little Girls in Blue".



NIGHTS OUT



by EZRA GOODMAN

notes on stage and screen events of the month: midnight doings on the dine and dance circuit

IF YOU ARE a persistent and patient moviegoer, you are sooner or later bound to run across a surprise package in the shipments of canned goods that keep coming in from the coast. Such a parcel is Twentieth Century-Fox's *Three Little Girls in Blue,* with June Haver, Vivian Blaine and Vera-Ellen. In spite of the title and Technicolor, this musical is one of the more superior song-and-dance concoctions. Its story — something about three chicks from the sticks who discover life and love in Atlantic City at the turn of the century — is treated with the casualness it deserves, leaving plenty of film footage for Miss Haver's smile, Miss Blaine's singing and Vera-Ellen's hoofing. Joseph Myrow's scintillating score, his first for movies, is complemented by producer Mack Gordon's zestful lyrics. A high spot of the film is the swing ballet Vera-Ellen does in one of those dream sequences in which almost all Hollywood dance production numbers take place.

The other musicals of the month can not be similarly recommended. *No Leave, No Love,* starring Van Johnson, can only be classified loosely as a musical, or as a movie for that matter. The inevitable Xavier Cugat, augmented this time by Guy Lombardo and his band, are in charge of the music. Van Johnson is in charge of the closeups. And Joe Pasternak is supposedly in charge of the production, the latter being a particularly moot point.

Johnny Coy dances in *Earl Carroll Sketchbook.* If you can devise a way of missing those portions of the picture in which Mr. Coy does not do his stuff, you will be doing yourself a distinct service. Nick Castle and Eugene Loring are credited with the dancing in *Thrill of Brazil,* which is about all you need to know about that picture.

Even without dancing, *Cloak and Dagger* manages to be almost as bad as some of the aforementioned musicals. In this particular production, Gary Cooper plays a nuclear scientist who forsakes atomic fission long enough to smooch with Lilli Palmer. Fritz Lang has contributed some taut directorial touches but the story and the cast leave him stymied. *The Welldigger's Daughter,* a Marcel Pagnol importation with Raimu and Fernandel is in the great tradition of Pagnol's *The Baker's Wife* and *Harvest* and constitutes another damning indictment of Hollywood and all its works.

A Word on Plays

Ben Hecht, whose *Specter of the Rose* and *Notorious* are current screenfare, last month added *The Front Page* and *A Flag Is Born* to his *Swan Song* on Broadway. *The Front Page* is still an accelerated item about reporters in the pre-Newspaper Guild days, but this edition of the play seems to lack some of the pace and excitement of the 1928 stage original directed by George S. Kaufman, and Lewis Milestone's rapid-fire film version of 1931. There is not much point in belaboring *A Flag Is Born,* which opened for a one-month run for the benefit of the American League for a Free Palestine. Mr. Hecht's propaganda-pageant is in a worthy cause, but if it is drama on the subject you want, just turn to the front page of your daily newspaper. And if it is propaganda you want, you will be more enlightened by reading the editorial columns. Paul Muni, as a Wandering Jew, hams it up in far from kosher fashion in a characterization that embodies the worst exaggerations of minority type-casting a la Hollywood. It is just possible that Mr. Hecht and Mr. Muni have been sojourning in Southern California too long. For the record, the choreography for *A Flag Is Born* was by Zamira Gon.

Richard Tauber would do well to profit by the example of Al Jolson who is heard but not seen in *The Jolson Story.* Mr. Tauber has what is known as a glorious tenor, but in appearance he is no Frankie Boy. The sight of Tauber as Prince Sou Chong huffing and puffing his way through the romantic schmalz of *Yours Is My Heart* distracts from the Tauber rendition of the lovely Franz Lehar melodies. It says on the program that the dances were directed by Henry Shwarze.

The producers of *Gypsy Lady* call that amalgam of Victor Herbert's *The Fortune Teller* and *The Serenade* "a period piece." That is a euphemistic description of an operetta which has to do with gypsies, gendarmes and people who go by the names of Rudolfo, Boris, Roszika and Imri. The Herbert score still scores, but the book bores. Val Valentinoff goes through some vigorous gypsy gyrations as devised by Aida Broadbent.

After Hours

At Cafe Society Uptown, Dorothy Jarnac, who replaced Joan McCracken in *Bloomer Girl,* is doing a series of satirical dances to the singing of Hope Foye. Miss Jarnac is technically adept and, what is more important in a night spot, has the personality to carry off the act and carry her audience with her. . . . Timmie Rogers, the ebbulient singing and dancing comedian, has become as much of a fixture at Cafe Society Downtown as those modernistic murals. . . . At the Havana-Madrid, where the doings are late and uninhibited, the rhumba team of Carmen and Rolando is one of the most combustible combinations seen recently.

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Patricia Bowman

(continued from page 12)

tered," now often tends to so-called new ways which have become as monotonous as the traditions inspired Russians threw off in the late nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth cen-

turies. The daring ones of "modernity" have evolved a product which has now become merely safe and saleable to theater and ballet audiences.

In other words, ballet runs a chance of being turned out again as on an assembly line. Companies, generally, dance well, but they have become so popular in approach that their efforts may fall to low levels of execution if care is not constantly exercised. And sloppy techniques, imitative choreography do dance no good. Ballet became popular in America through the work of great artists. The inheritance is a rich one. Let us not squander it.

We should actually strive for still more accomplishments, the development of independent artists-choreographers and not copyists, and also see to it, figuratively at least, that we keep on our toes.

The rest of what I have to say concerns young dancers and also actors and singers. Do not push the child dancer. Let her be nurtured by seeing the best ballets and dancers. Take photographs and movies of the child so that she may see herself as others see her, in contrast with adult performers. And do not hustle her into a career, but rather instil in her a real love of beautiful, simple dancing before you develop in her dreams of glamour. These are truisms, but some parents and avaricious teachers still fail to realize their validity.

As for actors and singers, they should also be trained in ballet. Anyone seeing Gertrude Lawrence on the stage can observe in her performance signs of her having been a dancer before she turned actress. She is as eloquent with her body as she is with her lines, her listening. And today one can also note others in opera and spoken drama who know dance. What a difference it makes!

Willam Christensen

(*continued from page* 12)

entertainer.

Ballet is on an upward trend in America. Today's choreographers will mold tomorrow's repertoire, will instruct tomorrow's taste. Ballet's popularity is evident in books, magazine articles, photographs, the cinema, and in a multitude of indications that include adolescents wearing "ballerina slippers" to their conclaves at the corner drug store. So it is high time to think of what the desirable future course will be. Those who will form the ballets of the future must today concern themselves with their responsibilities.

Why has ballet had such a tardy success in America? The answer lies in ballet's immediate past history in America; perhaps not in the actual history, but in the layman's idea of that history—and that history contains the following items in the layman's mind:

With Isadora Duncan all Hellas broke loose. For decades thereafter, full-blown ladies in vaguely Greek tea gowns trailed their scarves in the breath of a sourceless but perpetual Zephyr. They contributed no more to dancing than an unflinching determination to be Grecianly aesthetic. The Greeks had no word for them.

Another item: Butterflies a la Loie Fuller foolishly swooping with their wands, and having their public crescendi across many a high school stage in a manner that taste considered extremely classic. The passing of this vogue is mourned by the manufacturers of dyed India silk.

More recently a misguided admiration for Pavlova produced an alarming mortality among swans. Even the most cornfed of ballerinas, determinedly moribund, teetered their last before collapsing on the auditorium floor, night after night. Pavlova's personal mannerism (exquisitely passionate in her) did not lend itself to amateurish reproduction. More or less faithful copies merely suggested a *crise de nerfs* among the hyper-thyroid.

Item: Mary Wigman. Much water had passed under the bridge. Isadora's Greeks were older. Even so, many a Greek hostess gown, many a pince nez, was laid aside for the *tanzgruppe*. To oddly spasmodic noises, Isadora was forgotten in an effort to become *kolossal*. Some succeeded more than others.

Final item: Contemporary groups. Girls' colleges turn out heftily-thighed young ladies, darkly intense, who have gone out abroad to teach the young in their turn. Those who subscribe to the latest in revolts probably attain relief but not satisfaction.

It is easy to satirize. In all the above cases the vogue has its inception in the individualistic performer. The poor imitator vitiates popular taste.

In whose hands, then, lies the ability to guide, and to suggest perfection? In the hands of the choreographer. Gifted new choreographers are establishing their places in the American dance. I do not venture to suggest a course for them. I can only set down a personal observation.

I have seen new ballets which are novelties and only that. Some are a willful disregard of ballet tradition; even as such they have their place. The great Diaghilev did not make up

his seasons with *chefs d'oevre*. Important ballets were presented with seasonal ballets and those which were meant only to exploit sensationalism. Some of today's new ballets belong in that category.

Modern ballet companies are fortunate in the existence of a possible repertory that can be the means of modeling future taste. Within tradi-

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tional ballets, the abilities of a company's artists may be affirmed. To the choreographer, classic composition is a challenge. The repetition in performance of *Swan Lake, Raymonda, Sylphides,* and *Coppelia* means that audiences will eventually become able to appreciate nuance and degrees of ability. Greatness in performance is produced by the knowing audience which demands high standards.

Good theater and sound ballet will endure. A manager's continued catering to facile taste, when a sound classical repertory is lacking, will ultimately injure ballet. Until audiences gain the cumulative experience that will support good ballet and, above all, good theatre, the future of ballet lies in the hands of a few. In the hands of the choreographer, then, there is a great responsibility.

Let me speak then for *ballet blanc,* for the beautiful theatricality of Giselle dancing Albrecht's doom, or of the perfidious Black Swan. On classic ballet let tomorrow's repertory be based. Then let young gentlemen anxious to express a personal experience produce the ballet of Narcissus. Taste will know how to judge them. Their popularity will be a surer one, and it will be their function to keep dance repertory apace with the present day. For ballet tradition is as great, and as beautiful as opera tradition. Let us restore its beauty; then, if possible, let us enrich it.

Anton Dolin

(*continued from page* 12)

panies can bring their native art to other lands, and profit by the achievements of those cultures.

Right now there is a vogue for such ballets as *Billy the Kid, Fancy Free,* and *On Stage,* which I call typically American ballets. *Billy the Kid* is thoroughly American in subject matter. *Fancy Free* and *On Stage* are treated in a rather broad, American, musical style. Somehow or other I feel that, for all the achievement of these works, they and others like them are lacking in fundamental sincerity. They have wit and flair, but no heart. They are amusing, but monotonous. Possibly much of this is the result of the influence of musical comedy on ballet and vice versa. The so-called ballet that we have today on the musical comedy stage is not really ballet at all. It is watered-down ballet without much mind or muscle. Personally, I prefer unashamed tap dancing and hoofing when it comes to musicals.

A ballet like *Pillar of Fire* falls more or less under my classification of what I mean by ballet with international flavor. The European culture apparent in this work has been fused with a dynamic American point of view. This season, Markova and I are doing *Camille* which I believe will also live up to these standards. Cecil Beaton, an Englishman, has done the costumes and sets for *Camille;* the choreography is by John Taras; the music by Franz Schubert; the story is French, etc.

These are only a beginning. The goal has not yet been achieved. It is one worth aiming at. American ballet should become an artistic citizen of the world.

Frederic Franklin

(*continued from page* 13)

pursue an artistic career, the most serious one is to find a company of sufficient permanency and stability with which they can work until they develop. With so many small mushroom companies and groups springing up each year, and dancers shuttling from one to the other, always apparently in search of starring roles and higher salaries, the prospects for full artistic development are very poor indeed. I feel that the great need in this country is for a permanent ballet organization, with a theatre and school of its own, sufficiently endowed to permit of giving

(*continued on page* 38)

Left: Megie Vecchiarelli, Jojo Giaimo were winners in the jitterbug division. Above: Grand March of jive entrants.

HARVEST MOON BALL

THE TWELFTH ANNUAL HARVEST MOON BALL at Madison Square Garden brought out 18,000 dance fans in September. Turning the spotlight on America's dance enthusiasts, the Ball is sponsored each year by the News Welfare Association. The contestants jived, fox-trotted and waltzed to Elliot Lawrence's music, with Machito and his orchestra playing the tangos and rumbas. After four hours of competition on the night of the finals, the five judges selected the five winning teams. The winners shared in a $3,500 contract for a two-week engagement on Broadway at Loew's State Theatre and in many subsequent bookings.

Photos: Vincent D. Sullivan

jive, rumba, and waltz contestants bring out the ballroom fans to Madison Square Garden en masse

Left: Stuffy Trepp and Jean Larvan set a pace. Below: The winners, Martin and Margaret Rogers, lead march.

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Frederic Franklin

(*continued from page* 36)

only three or four performances per week. In this way, dancers would have a chance to develop, and would not be worn out with performances every night of the week through most of the year.

As Maitre de Ballet, one of my chief problems is to find dancers who can tackle character work. When girls come to audition, as a rule their classical work is good, with a good foundation and correct execution. However, if they are asked to do anything in the character line, they fall down hopelessly. They should study character and mime with an established artist, and should give as much thought to this as they do to their classical work. Actually, there are some ballets previously in the repertory of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo which could not be given today because of the lack of good character dancers.

Maria Gambarelli

(*continued from page* 13)

Brigitte Hartwig; Nathalie Krassovska, the former Nathalie Leslie; and Valya Valentinoff, whose birth certificate reads William Daixal. Marc Platt, a typical American, was changed to Platoff.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the sceptre of the dance belonged to Italy. In the second part of the nineteenth century, Russia imported all the finest Italian ballet masters and absorbed their culture. But today when Slavenska, Danilova, Markova or Hightower—just to name a few of the great dancers—rehearse, they all use the Cecchetti method as the soundest and most proficient. Cecchetti is the ballet master who taught Pavlova and many of the great dancers of the original Russian Ballet. I would say that the main fault of ballet today lies in the fact that it depends far too much on technicality and not sufficiently on interpretation. There are a great many wonderful dancers, but they develop the acrobatic and mechanical side rather than the introspective and interpretive.

Modern dancing is making extraordinary strides ahead and if it could only be met by ballet half way, we would see some very startling results. One of the few people who have tried to combine these two schools is Antony Tudor, but one man is not enough to achieve this goal. After the first World War the influence of Germany was almost mesmerizing modern dance in this country. Everything was gruesome, black and angular. But with time American trends have developed, and brought some sunshine into this field. Today, the technique of modern dances is stronger, and costuming has come to be more and more an integral part of the dance. In the next five years I trust that these two mediums will come closer together.

This coming season will be a crucial one for ballet in this country. There will be a great many companies on the road; the highest number ever to tour this country at once. While competition sometimes makes for topnotch performances, I hope that the American public has really reached the stage where it can take such a constant stream of it. The forming of so many large companies is also a thorn in the side of the small groups. The public is becoming so spectacle-conscious that it is losing taste for the ensembles which are modest in number.

What I feel is most important in the development of our dancers, whether their outlet be classical or modern, is that they keep in mind that dancing is not a feat but an art, and that the body can only go so far and no further.

Martha Graham

(*continued from page* 13)

tors, always maligned as blue-nosed and puritan, are said to have "won the West with a Bible and a gun." I seem to remember that they went over the Cumberland gap with a squirrel rifle under one arm and a dulcimer

under the other. They settled the middle country—the "great meadow"—with a five-string mountain banjo and a double fiddle. If I may turn historian, I should like to say they won the West with a dance and a song.

This is the spirit back of the dance that has grown up in this new country. We have a song—and we dance it. Sometimes that song is epic, broad and strong. Sometimes it is a song of close life, life in cities, life under the shadow of skyscrapers. Sometimes it is the song of our inner selves—the terrors of the brave, the sorrows of those who pursue happiness, the joys of the broken-hearted.

That is our birthright—a danced song. *Our* song! Our own dance! It is no accident that this country produced its own kind of dance. It is, rather, inevitable that it should. Or that our dance, when it came, should cut deeper than mere escapism or pretty-pretty spectacle. Like a deep spring in rocky ground, it would have its own cold, sharp tang. Coming from so deep in our natures, it could only emerge in our own forms, in the language of our own movement.

My interpretation of the current enthusiasm is that our audiences—audiences of *dancing Americans*—recognize the thing we bring them as something that belongs to them, that has always belonged to them. It is the nation's legacy and we merely return it to the heirs.

Certainly this did not come about

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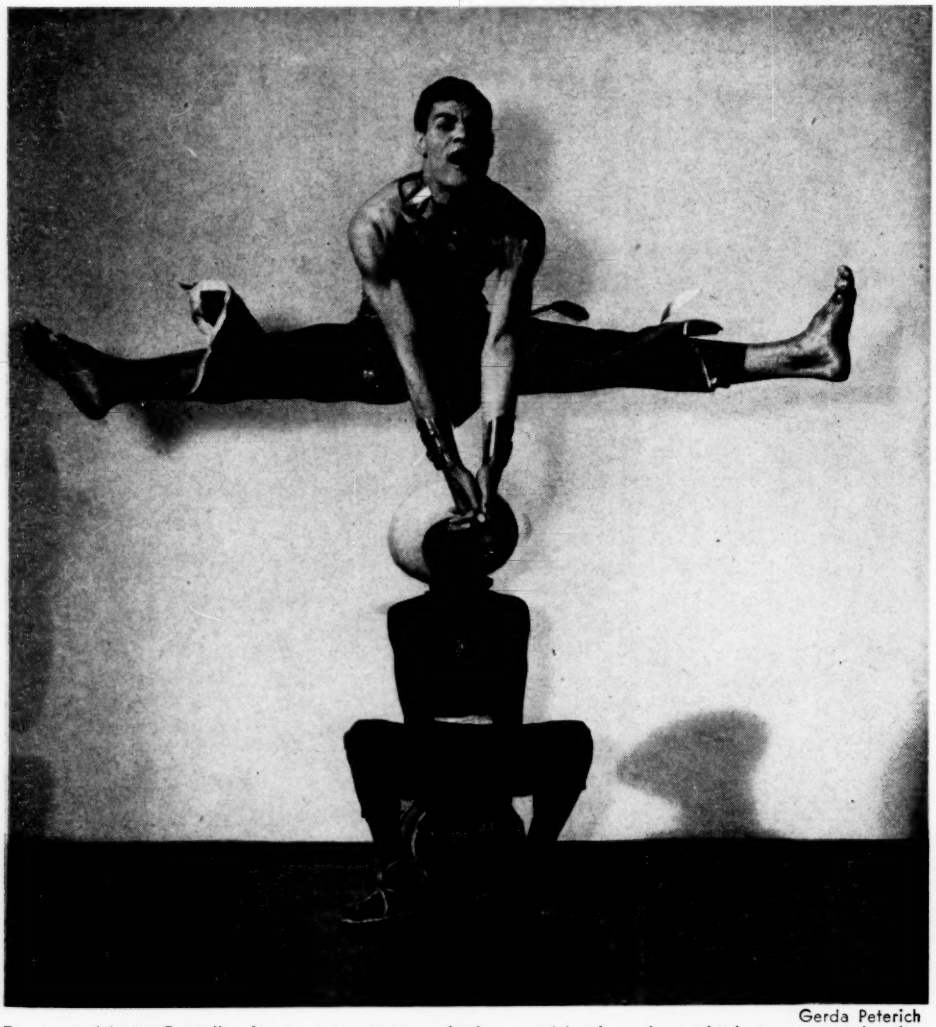
Claude Marchant's rhythms are a hit in "Show Boat"



Gerda Peterich

Drummer Mario Costellio beats out primitive rhythms as Marchant leaps high in an aerial split.

CAREERS sometimes hang by a thread, but the career of Claude Marchant, featured dancer of *Show Boat,* hangs by a feather. For it was a job in a feather factory that led him to the doorstep of Katherine Dunham and the threshold of Afro-Cuban folklore.

Born in Charleston, South Carolina, Marchant found himself working in New York at the age of eighteen. On the way to his job, he used to pass a theatre where a poster announced that Katherine Dunham was preparing a company for her New York debut. One day, he decided to ask for an audition. With only a high school minstrel show and some tap lessons to fall back on, his tryout was a dud. But Miss Dunham, impressed by his efforts, took him on as a student. He soon became a full-fledged member of the Dunham troupe where he remained for five years.

Last year he left Miss Dunham to form his own group, consisting of a drummer and several dancers. In his own company and in his dancing in *Show Boat,* he has made a specialty of the exciting, "primitive" rhythms of Afro-Cuban dancing. With his *Show Boat* earnings, he hopes to finance a Broadway debut for his troupe this season.

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Martha Graham

(*continued from page* 39)

easily. That was not to be expected. As we struggled to find our own way in the dance, we found it hard. In Americans, that is a "healthy symptom." We are a thorny people. We

fought over the Constitution, too. But we wrung out of the principles on paper a base upon which the country might grow. We have done that, too, in the dance—and in the other arts, as well. We have won for ourselves a base—on which *we* might grow.

I do not pretend to be a prophet. But the future of the dance in America is one of the brightest things, I know. However, let us not tell ourselves, merely, that we are riding on the crest of a vogue. That would be a poor, impermanent thing. We have won the right to growth—the right to work harder, build better, find new frontiers and dance them down. It might be that we are entering upon a new era. That is my hope—and my belief.

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La Meri

(*continued from page* 14)

from the viewpoint of the protagonist of the specific type of dance in which I have specialized since my return to the States at the outbreak of the War.

At this writing, "my" type of dance, the ethnologic dance, is having the toughest sledding of all. (And let me make clear here that the ethnologic dance differs from the folk dance in that it is an art form, not a communal

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recreation.) Ballet is packing large houses through long seasons. Modern is firmly established in educational institutions throughout the country, and has its "concert courses" in New York. The more popular forms, ballroom, tap, acrobatic, etc., are riding the wave of a theater-and-nightclub era which outshines the roaring Twenties. Even the American folk dance has come into its own as choreography in many productions. No such good fortune has touched the ethnologic dance with its fairy wand. It still remains for the artist to carry her art into greener financial fields by sheer force of her own personality, for the art form itself has in no wise been recognized in any of the fields of endeavor which have accepted the other forms of dance.

Let us consider the field in which ballet is preeminent. No far-sighted manager or "angel" sees in the ethnologic realm the very obvious possibilities for glamorous entertainment embodied in a company featuring entirely the dance-dramas of Spain, India, Java, South America, et al. And yet such a company would transcend glamour itself to help lay the foundations for international understanding and world peace.

No educational institution has established a "chair" for the teaching of

any forms of ethnologic dance. And yet, again, here lies the road to international understanding and inter-racial tolerance. Not to mention the Oriental's approach to body building which I venture to say, cannot be equalled in the West.

In the more commercial fields, choreography for exotic productions is only too often created by specialists in one type of dance and executed by specialists

in other types of dance. In the night-club field, only the Spanish dance, lately come from the *cafétin* can move onto the floor unspoiled by what managers consider the necessity of popularization of interpretation.

Many fine protagonists have succeeded in the ethnologic field. But it is the *artist* who has succeeded, not the art which she represents. Argentinita was always box-office in the concert field, and choreographed many ballets. But it was Argentinita, not Spanish dancing which was bought and sold.

Five years ago I became deeply preoccupied with this subject. First, for myself, and later for pupils of mine, who, drawn to this type of dance, found the going pretty difficult. There is little or no outlet for them. As a matter of fact there was no place for me either. Although there were exotic ballets and productions in half the theaters of New York, I found ballet choreographers and dancers being called upon to work at them instead of exotic dancers. Making a living in the commercial field necessitated (it seemed) the "jazzing up" of a dance art which only too often was temple-born. For myself I created a Dance Center where those called toward the ethnologic dance could study and make some sort of living, however precarious. It grows slowly and the hard way, but we are not discouraged and we hope to succeed. Many fine exponents of the ethnologic dance have lent willing hands to the Center . . . Tei Ko, Asadata Dafora, Grant Code . . . not to mention Ruth St. Denis who helped found it, and Ted Shawn who has also danced there. But the problem which confronts the ethnologic dancer is the one which faced other types of dance some years ago: the very real problem of being recognized as a separate and valuable art form. And the role which it can play in American life is one which cannot be over-rated, for in it lies the seed for a world peace in which all arts and all artists may live and work for the common cause of the ultimate emergence of the Soul of Man.

Jerome Robbins

(*continued from page* 14)

cropped up in shows in every conceivable form. Most people feel that this trend has run its course. I feel that it is just the end of the first step of dance moving with the theatre, and that although there may be a pause before it continues, the next step will inevitably show a higher form of alliance between these arts. This will have its effect on ballets as well as shows. A number of people will then say that this will not be "ballet". I don't think that the American dance will ever limit itself because of a term.

I think that there will be the emergence of a classical American dance—American classicism, as there is Italian,

Russian and French. I think we are on the verge of it now. We have made a good start in theatrical aspects of dancing, having examined our background in terms of folk material and having been influenced by the great strides that the modern dance has taken.

Considering the problems of the choreographer, I feel that, for the main part, the choreographer is going to take the brunt of the dance problem. Unfortunately, his work and livelihood are dependent on the kind of economic patterns that are set up in our society. Artists are always torn between their ideal image and their practical existence, and one or the other usually suffers. If it were ever possible to have a State-financed American dance, the art would progress enormously. New choreographers would have the opportunity to come forth much faster than under the economic restrictions of privately competing companies which are forced to present many popular successes, using established choreographers. Although this winter's competition seems to be forcing the managements to present works of new choreographers, it is because of their search for "novelties", rather than a sincere attempt to develop new talents.

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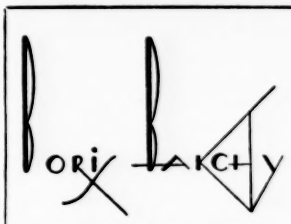
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Fashions in the Dance

Photos: Larry Colwell

STAR-MODEL BARBARA CAVANAUGH wears back- and off-stage dance fashions. She is shown, above, in a rehearsal costume by Chatila with slippers by Studio Club. On the right, her coiffure was set by Joan of Saks and her gown, fabrics by Dazians, is set off by Capezio's Matador slippers.

Florence Rogge

(*continued from page* 14)

at the theatre.

If there is any doubt that ballet is at present in great demand, I wish people could see the difference in the turnout for our weekly ballet auditions. Once we were swamped with more dancers than could be used. But today they are all working in Broadway revues, in ballet companies, in Hollywood and in road shows. I think this is wonderful, but when there is so much demand and when, as a result, there is such a quantity of dancers being turned out, it seems to me that the art should be careful of its quality.

We have come far in American ballet—miraculously far. But we can go further. Fine music has taken its place in the lives of millions of Americans to whom a generation ago it was a closed book. Ballet can fill just such a role in the lives of our people on a comparable level.

Ted Shawn

(*continued from page* 15)

theatre in all its phases, such as it has never been in American theatre up to now.

There will be less "clique" support and more inclusive study and appreciation of the dance in all its rich and varied aspects. More men have been turning their attention to dance as a serious life work, and with increasing numbers and increasing quality this will give dance a substance, strength and authority it lacked when considered predominantly feminine.

Indications are that, at long last, support and management can be found for native American dancers, choreographers, and for forms of dance indigenous to America. The focus of attention on imported dancers will continue to decrease.

Training for the legitimate stage and for grand opera will increasingly demand that the complete theatre artist first of all learn full control and expressive use of his body. Eventually, we will expect actors and singers to express equally through bodily movement, as well as through voice.

Dance must take its rightful place as the oldest, noblest and highest of all human art forms. It must have its own permanent theatres throughout the land, permanent dance companies in all the cities which now support a symphony orchestra. Smaller cities must have suitable auditoriums in which to present annually a long list of a great variety of serious dance artists and organizations. Community art dancing (not merely ballroom dancing) should be a part of the cultural life of each town, as much as community singing.

If the growth of the past thirty years continues from now on, I myself will live to see all of the foregoing accomplished.

Helen Tamiris

(*continued from page* 15)

general, they have had experience in creating and directing dances for ballet companies, small ensembles or modern groups. Some have written their own scripts, and others have developed compositions based on written librettos. In the main, the emphasis or prime consideration has been on the dance or choreography, with plot, music, decor secondary.

To create dances for the musical comedy theatre requires a completely different orientation. To attempt to go into the theatre directly from the concert fields, I believe is to court disaster.

In the theatre, the choreographer cannot take his own time in developing his ideas. He must think, create, and organize his material quickly, because there is a deadline. He is usually given about five weeks in which to audition

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dancers, create, direct and polish the dancers.

Then again, the audiences are different. They are made up of a cross-section of the entire population. They come, not only to see the dancing, but to enjoy all the other elements that go to make up a show: the book, lyrics, music, performers, costumes, etc. It is not a question of playing down to an audience, which is an erroneous idea and has led many choreographers to do less than their best. It is the problem of understanding that aside from the dance-wise members of the audience, there are those whose knowledge of the dance is limited. This awareness will force the choreographer to make his work in no wise less artistic, but less obscure and less involved.

Aside from understanding his audience, the choreographer of the theater must learn to adapt himself to the demands of the play itself, its period, style, timing, music, etc. He must learn to become part of a creative staff and, incidentally, to welcome collaboration, which is so necessary to the development of a good theater production.

Few dance or dramatic schools are equipped to give the choreographer opportunities to work on a given script and then test it before an audience. The professional theater, with its keen competition and demand for the highest skills, eliminates the untried or inexperienced. Learning by doing is certainly the only way to gain this experience, but as far as the Broadway musical is concerned, a very costly one. Should a choreographer fail in his first show, other producers would be loath to risk engaging him again. Many a potentially good choreographer has been set back just because of this one ill-advised attempt. The best way to overcome this situation is to work in summer stock, out of town operetta companies, or hotels that have an entertainment staff, where budgets are smaller, where there is opportunity to work in a variety of styles, and where the choreographer will find his new audiences.

In conclusion, wherever the choreographer finds himself, he will further not only his own development, but that of the entire field of choreography if he will keep one rule before him at all times: Every movement conceived must be integrated with the entire show.

Charles Weidman

(*continued from page* 15)

pression, arriving at the same conclusions. I have seen in the past eight years a general fusion of ballet and modern. I have seen the ballet companies becoming more modern and the modern companies more balletic.

Maybe one does not remember now the moderns' cry of twenty years ago: "We are human beings with blood in our veins and sweat on our faces—we want to dance as such and not as dragon flies, swans, or California poppies." *The Great American Goof, Rodeo, Fancy Free* and *Pillar of Fire* are, strictly speaking, modern ballets, all of which have been warmly received by the public.

The themes which the ballet companies are choosing are, to my mind, right, healthy and strong, but frequently the ballet choreographers need more growth in the development of movement and pantomime. A good example of a ballet which failed in this respect, to me, was *Gift of the Magi,* in which the technique employed for movement and dramatic gesture was not appropriate to the theme.

Perhaps I can make my point better by speaking of a modern ballet which had a similar poignant theme; that ballet is Miss Humphrey's *Inquest,* which by using simplicity of style in movement and pantomime rather than elaborate school figures, emphasized and clarified the theme.

Librettists

(*continued from page* 18)

proves no more nor less diverting than a vaudeville act.

This is by no means intended to imply that the composer and choreographer make poor librettists. Jerome Robbins was so successful with his *Fancy Free* that it was developed into the book for the hit show *On the Town.* Tudor, too, when he has a solid theme, as in *Judgement of Paris* (inspired by a classic legend) is eminently successful as librettist.

Trying the shoe on the other foot, we have several examples of authors who turned out weak dance librettos: Pushkin with *Aleko,* Gautier with *Giselle,* O. Henry with *Gift of the Magi,* Saroyan with *The Great American Goof,* and Van Druten with *Undertow.* With illustrious failures such as these, choreographers can hardly be blamed for distrusting "literature". But that is begging the question.

In asking the various purveyors of ballet what they meant by ballet, I found a great deal of confusion. That is hardly surprising, since the dictionaries themselves are at variance. Webster calls the ballet "a theatrical dance of an aesthetic character", while Funk and Wagnalls says it is a "pantomime dance expressing emotion or telling a story."

Clearly the latter definition applies, to my mind, both to the historic development and the very nature of ballet. The dance is kinetic, like drama and music, not static like painting. Therefore, it must have progression of plot, as in drama, or development of a theme, as in music. You can look at a picture only so long. Similarly, the most complicated dance patterns fail to hold the interest unless the emotions are involved, or a story is unfolded.

Ballet, the true foundation of theatre, calls for a real synthesis of the theatre arts. To stress music, choreography and decor above literary theme is like building a four-legged table with one leg sawed off.

That sawed-off leg is the defect Jean Georges Noverre (called the Shakespeare of the ballet) had in mind when he wrote a hundred years ago: "This art shares with the best plays the advantage of inspiring the spectator by the charm of its interest and illusion. . . . If our ballets be feeble, mono-

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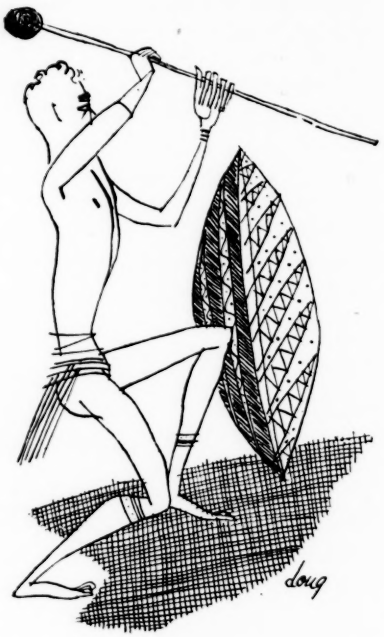
tonous and dull, if they be devoid of ideas . . . it is less the fault of the art than of the artist."

Certainly authors do not pre-empt the department of ideas. Anybody and everybody in the theatre, from impresario down to booking agent, boasts of having great ideas. However, it is the elaboration and arrangement of an idea in dramatic continuity that counts. That has been historically the role of the librettist. The choreographers in their supreme egoism have taken that role unto themselves and in most instances have failed miserably.



Fortunately, mine is not a lone voice in the terpsichorean wilds. Here are a few recent critical judgments: David Lichine's *Fair at Sorochinsk* was called "a long, infantile extravaganza that sets the art of the ballet back some thirty years." More of the same, only much more damning, was said of the dull, two-hour-long *Raymonda,* revived by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. For Dolin's *Pas de Quatre,* critical emphasis was on the technical tour de force, not on content. Tudor's *Romeo and Juliet* failed to strike fire or engross the critic. The choreography of Oboukhoff's *Pavillon d'Armide* was "inclined to be static and to lack fluency of progression." And so on, with much criticism in the same vein.

No longer able to swallow the romantic clap-trap in *Sylphides* and *Giselle,* the dance critics have polished the words "fabulous", "lyric" and

"eloquent" and applied them to Alicia Markova's legs. One critic ventured that *Fair at Sorochinsk* was unintentionally a travesty of the Russian ballet. I venture to say that *Giselle, Sylphides* and their ilk are travesties of the entire classic school of ballet. This was brought vividly home to me recently during the Ballet Theatre's offering of *Giselle,* followed by *Gala Performance.* Intentionally or not, Tudor's choreography in the latter piece was a murderous caricature of the whole "white ballet" style. The audience was keenly appreciative of the travesty.

Ballet as an art form is important; it is also inclined to be highbrow. Its devotees would probably resent a comparison to vaudeville. Yet, in my opinion, if it continues to depend on the cleverness of the choreographers rather than on literary content, it is heading for the "hoofer circuit." Already the signposts are up: the trained-bear act and the puppet show in *Petrouchka,* the "trapeze act" in *Sylphides,* and the polite kooch dance and hoop act in *Judgement of Paris.* Vaudeville is dead: long live ballet!

Who's Who

DOROTHY BARRET was a professional dancer before she retired to become a writer.

EDWIN DENBY, who will review dancing for this magazine, was dance critic for *Modern Music* and the *New York Herald Tribune.* He has been a dancer himself.

FRED FEHL has been photographing the dance in this country since leaving Vienna in 1939.

PHILIP K. SCHEUER is film critic of the *Los Angeles Times.*

VINCENT D. SULLIVAN, photographer for the armed forces and the O.W.I. during the war, now does special documentary work for the Port of New York Authority.

WALTER TERRY, dance critic of the *New York Herald Tribune,* contributes a monthly article to *Dance.*

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Dance Chronicle

(continued from page 30)

It gives you a sense—as Poe does—of losing your bearings, the feeling of an elastic sort of time and a heaving floor. As a friend of mine remarked, "When it's over, you don't know what hit you." *Night Shadow* bears no resemblance to the recent Balanchine "classic" pieces—no resemblance to their firm dance lilt and their formal transparence; though it is not a mimed piece, its effects are related to mime effects.

At the opposite pole from *Night Shadow* in form and in sentiment is the reconstruction by Danilova and Balanchine of Petipa's *Raymonda*, which the Monte Carlo also introduced last spring. Not only its air of leisure but its candor and sunny clarity are qualities unusual nowadays. It is difficult at first to be so unnervous, so relaxed and unresentful as this long and peaceful ballet invites you to be. The surprise is that it can be so long and so peaceful without turning foolish or false in sentiment. *Raymonda* has an easy amplitude and graciousness in good spirits; there is a sweetness in the air like that of a large, happy, well-mannered and gifted family living in a large, old-fashioned summer house. And you feel in it, too, the family note that distinguishes so pleasingly the Monte Carlo company itself.

There is, I am told, little of the original Petersburg *Raymonda* in this version, though the most fantastic dance invention, the ballerina's third-act Czardas on toe is authentic Petipa, and Petipa's, too, is the large, bold force of the male pas de quatre in that act. But all through this American *Raymonda*, the resourcefulness in simplicity, the vitality of dance rhythm, the clarity in plastic contrasts, the grand relief of the human figure are in the honest Petipa manner. The dances are by no means easy to do, for a blurred or unintelligent movement shows up at once. Everywhere they look as if it felt good to dance them and it feels good to watch them. With all their profuse variety there is not a mean gesture to be seen for a whole hour. Some people find this escapism, but as a conception of society it strikes me as revolutionary.

Without Danilova to dance them, her great parts looked pale and some

fine passages meaningless. Franklin too was not at his best without her. Magnanimous and buoyant lyricist as he is and an excellent actor, he seemed a little tired and distressed and his style suffered; he looked as if he were counting for everybody else on stage and keeping a weather eye out for everyone's mistakes. In Danilova's parts, Krassovska, lovely and sweetly feminine when she can be yielding and modest, rather lacks the authority in development, the vitality and variety of dance rhythm that make grandeur lively. Marie Jeanne, fantastically sharp in *Imperial*, excellent in *Night Shadow*, was on the other hand lost in *Baiser*, in which her intention to look soft and sweet made her slur the steps, vaguely wave her arms and miss the drama. Tallchief was wonderfully fascinating at moments, but her bad ankle restricted her.

A dancer who was constantly a pleasure to watch was Boris. Her lovely figure, her bearing and balance, her line, her clean, swift steps and harmonious ease, her reliability in every part were very remarkable. So was the intensity of her acting in *Frankie*. Her variations in *Raymonda* and her duo with Lindgren in *Night Shadow* were a delight; but her best part was *Serenade* where she showed a sense of what she seems still a little to lack—a wider scope in rhythm, a bolder timing of main accents and a more elastic change of speed which will sustain and join the phrases of a dance in what in music is called a period. With her sure instinct both for drama and music and Danilova's example, she should be able to find the large sweep of classic continuity. Young Chouteau, as careful though not nearly so finished, but clear and intelligent in her dancing, has by nature a vivid sense of rhythm and without pretention or bad manners she

Gard says it may be called "Ballet Imperial", "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme", "The Night Shadow", "Concerto Barocco", "Danses Concertantes" or "Mozartiana" — but it is always Balanchine.

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can quite naturally be herself. If her development continues as happily, she seems to me to have very great possibilities. There isn't space for more, but one should at least mention Tyven's

excellence this season, Goddard's Nelly, Magallanes' noble support, especially in *Barocco,* young Weaver's cleanness, Kokic's Wrangler, Bliss's Roper, and above all Danielian's really superb dancing in *Raymonda.*

Watching the dancers in good and less good performances, and considering the handicaps the management imposed on them this fall, there is no doubt that with a little planning the company can get its repertory back in shape; that it can bring us next time a novelty as brilliant as those of last spring; and that with Balanchine to clarify the execution of *Night Shadow, Baiser* and the classic pieces; with Danilova dancing and the rest back in their best form, the company as an ensemble can show again the light, clear, intelligent dance style they specialize in and that ballet lovers have justly admired them for.

* * *

Ballet for America, a touring group of twelve soloists, including the Misses Gollner, Granzeva, Razoumova, Lee, and Rosay, and the Mssrs. Shabelevsky, Lazovsky, Petroff, and O'Brien, opened in Bridgeport September 14, and a crowd of ballet celebrities went out to applaud old friends and to see the new Massine *Les Arabesques* composed for the company. It is a "concert" setting of Beethoven's Archduke Trio. The two-piano version of the score disfigures the trio, and Massine has callously used the score as a cue sheet pure and simple. He might as well have been setting Gretry. Music aside, there are ingenious entrances, quick characterizations, rapid shifts of pattern and among the lifts one very effective new one swung with a leg bent back and then extended. There were also rude gettings-into-position for a lift and pinched end-poses. The older dancers were not in very crisp form to start with and grew vaguer as the evening proceeded through a version of Massine's charming *Matelots* (1925); and after that poor Petroff was quite unequal to the *Sleeping Beauty* pas de deux which he did with Gollner. The evening ended with *The Gentleman Takes a Bride,* a dance farce by Romanoff (Chauve-Souris style) in which Razoumova as a passionate Oriental was the bright spot of the evening. Kathryn Lee will presumably be the hit of this troupe; she is bold, young, pretty and gifted, and she turns on a nightclub charm. For all its Ballet Russe background, Ballet for America doesn't dispel the doubts that other pocket ballets have raised; they can't be big-time ballet and yet they invite the comparison.

The deadline for this report being September 15, the arrival of the Original Ballet Russe at the Metropolitan and that of Ballet Theatre at the Broadway will be covered in the next issue.

Broadway Dance

(*continued from page* 25)

possible that they would welcome a new accent on tap dancing (good tap dancing) and a diminishing of big ballet numbers, but they would miss the magic of dance in matters of general staging of action and they would not like ballet replaced by uninventive hoofing routines. There is another supporting point for ballet in musical comedy as far as the audience appeal is concerned. Ballet as an independent theater form is burgeoning on Broadway and giving every indication of establishing itself permanently, not as a cultist art, but as a popular theater attraction. It would be foolish not to transplant some of that popularity to the musical comedy field.

By way of summation, one could guess that ballet will suffer a temporary lull in the field of musical comedy but not a complete disappearance; that tap dancing will continue to flourish, as it should, and better its scope by absorbing some of the more dynamic qualities of ballet; that within the near future a knowing producer or a playwright with exploratory impulses will find fresh usages for ballet in the field of musical comedy and revue; that ultimately ballet will become, because of its acceptance as a valid theater form, a standard ingredient of musical comedy, as standard as song or as tap dancing. And looking far into the future, one can see the Tamiris vision, a theater in which all the arts unite for the projection of a single theme. There will probably always be the categories of musical comedy, revue and drama as there will probably always be, in spite of fusions and exchanges, ballet and some form of modern dance, but on occasion, there is certain to be a united arts production, for the trend is in that direction. That, however, is a story in itself. Meanwhile, ballet may be scratched from the race towards bigger and better musical comedy, but you may be certain that it will be back in the running as soon as its fleet-footed skill has been missed.

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FOOTNOTES

paragraphs out of the past, Hecht, reviews

Ben Hecht, Hollywood's Katzenjammer Kid, was telling an interviewer about the typical Hollywood producer. Hecht's most recent movie, incidentally, is "Specter of the Rose," made for Republic Pictures and producer Herbert J. Yates, whom Hecht does not classify among his Hollywood hates.

"In eighteen years of screen writing," sounds off Hecht, "I have tried my damndest to characterize a producer. Never could. Then one day to kill an hour I slipped into a neighborhood. They were showing a horse opera, 'Stormy's Horse' was the name of it.

"One of the sequences showed Stormy riding toward a cliff. You could see there was going to be hell to pay, and, sure enough, at the edge of the cliff Stormy topples off his horse and dives over the brink.

"The next shot showed the interior of a saloon in a Western town, the cowboys and miners lined up at the bar for drinks. Presently in canters the horse who nudged his wet nose against the back of some cowboy's neck. The cowboy turns quickly—'Why,' he says, 'it's Stormy's horse. He's trying to tell us something.'

"There, by God, I thought, that's a producer—always trying to tell you something."

* * *

Fifteen years ago in Dance Magazine: The artistic world had not yet recovered from the shock of Anna Pavlova's sudden death . . . Mary Wigman made her American debut . . . Anton Dolin had just finished his book, "Divertissements," dealing with his experiences in the Diaghileff Ballet . . . Ballroom dance sensation was the "Hoosier Hop", introduced by the Duncan sisters in the movie, "It's a Great Life" . . . Joan Crawford was in the full swing of the "jazz-mad youth" period with "Our Dancing Daughters" . . . Plans were being completed for bringing Uday Shankar to the United States.

* * *

Newest additions to the ballet novel bookshelf are "Six Curtains for Natasha" (Lippincott) by Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon, which is announced as a "gay and dizzy" tale of the ballet world. The authors should never have raised the curtain on this embarrassing exhibition . . . "Edward Zoltan" (Beechhurst Press) by Philip Freund is the story of an introspective aesthete who becomes involved with an auburn-haired ballerina named Kitty in the New York of the Twenties. Mr. Freund knows the meter and meaning of words, but his novel, fundamentally, is bloodless and inconclusive.

E. G.

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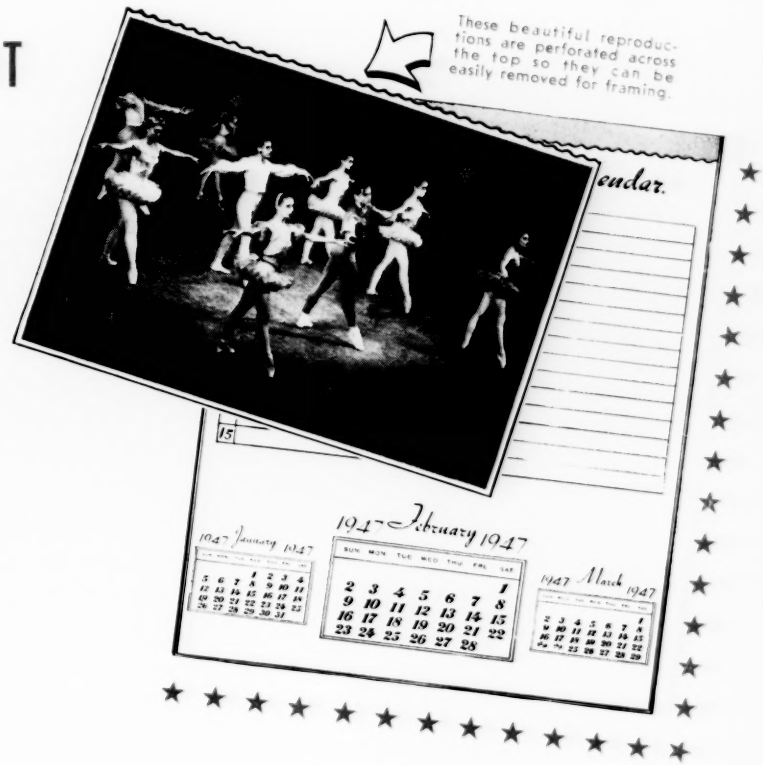
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